The Entail or The Lairds of Grippy

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WORKS OF JOHN GALT

THE ENTAIL; OR, THE LAIRDS OF GRIPPY. First Edition published in Three Volumes, 12mo, 1823.

"The callan's gaun aff at the head."

Swan Electric Engraving Co

THE ENTAIL

OR

THE LAIRDS OF GRIPPY

WITH INTRODUCTION

BY S. R. CROCKETT

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOHN WALLACE

VOLUME II

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"THE CALLAN'S GAUN AFF AT THE HEAD" . . . . . *Frontispiece*

"SHAKE HIM WEEL, MR PITWINNOCH" . . . . . *to face page* 272

THE ENTAIL

THE ENTAIL

CHAPTER LVI

WHEN the leddy returned from the court to Grippy, Walter, who in the meantime had been somehow informed of the nature of the proceedings instituted against him, said to his mother—

"Weel, mother, so ye hae been trying to mak me daft; but I'm just as wise as ever."

"Thou's ordain't to bring disgrace on us a'," was her answer, dictated under a feeling of vague apprehension, arising from the uncertainty which seemed to lower upon the issue of the process by the evidence of Dr Denholm.

"I'm sure I hae nae hand in't," said Walter; "an' ye hadna meddled wi' me, I would ne'er hae spoken to Keelevin to vex you. But I suppose, mother, that you and that wily headcadab Geordie hae made naething o' your fause witnessing."

"Haud thy fool tongue, and insult na me!"

exclaimed the leddy, in a rage at the simpleton's insinuation, which was uttered without the slightest sentiment of reproach. "But," she added, "ye'll see what it is to stand wi' a het face afore the court the morn."

"I'll no gang," replied Walter; "I hae nae broo o' courts and law-pleas."

"But ye shall gang, if the life be in your body."

"I'll do nothing but what Mr Keelevin bids me."

"Mr Keelevin," exclaimed the leddy, "ought to be drum't out o' the town for bringing sic tribulation intil my family. What business had he, wi' his controversies, to jumble law and justice in the manner he has done the day?" And while she was thus speaking, George and Mr Pitwinnoch made their appearance.

"Hech, man, Geordie!" said Watty; "I'm thinking, instead o' making me daft, ye hae dementit my mother, poor body; for she's come hame wi' a flyte proceeding out of her mouth like a two-edged sword."

"If you were not worse than ye are," said his brother, "you would have compassion on your mother's feelings."

"I'm sure," said Watty, "I hae every compassion for her; but there was nae need o' her to wish to make me daft. It's a foul bird that fyles its ain nest; and really, to speak my mind, I think, Geordie, that you and her werena wise,

but far left to yoursel's, tó put your heads intil the hangman's halter o' a law-plea anent my intellectuals."

Gabriel Pitwinnoch, who began to distrust the effect of the evidence, was troubled not a little at this observation ; for he thought that if Walter spoke as well to the point before the court the cause must be abandoned. As for George, he was scarcely in a state to think of anything, so much was he confounded and vexed by the impression of Dr Denholm's evidence, the tenor of which was so decidedly at variance with all he had flattered himself it would be. He, however, said—

"Ye're to be examined to-morrow, and what will you say for yourself?"

"I hae mair modesty," replied Walter, "than to be my ain trumpeter. I'll say naething but what Mr Keelevin bids me."

Gabriel smiled encouragingly to George at this, who continued—

"You had better tak care what ye say."

"Na," cried Watty ; "an' that's the gait o't, I'll keep a calm sough : least said's soonest mended—I'll haud my tongue."

"But you must answer every question."

"Is't in the Shorter or the Larger Catechism?" said Walter. "I can say till the third petition o' the t'ane, and frae end to end o' the t'ither."

"That's quite enough," replied Gabriel, "and more than will be required of you."

But the satisfaction which such an agreeable

exposure of the innocency of the simpleton was calculated to afford to all present was disturbed at this juncture by the entrance of Mr Keelevin.

"I'm glad, gentlemen," said he the moment he came in, "that I have found you here. I think you must all be convinced that the investigation shouldna gang farther. I'm sure Mr Walter will be willing to grant a reasonable consideration to his mother for her care and trouble in the house, and even to assign a moiety o' his income to you, Mr George. Be counselled by me: let us settle the matter in that manner quietly."

Pitwinnoch winked to his client, and Watty said—

"What for should I gie my mother ony more? Hasna she bed, board, and washing, house-room and chattels, a' clear aboon her jointure? And, I'm sure, Geordie has nae lawful claim on me for ony aliment. Od, Mr Keelevin, it would be a terrible wastrie o' me to do the like o' that. They might weel mak me daft if I did sae."

"But it will be far decenter and better for a' parties to enter into some agreement of that sort —don't you think so, Mrs Walkinshaw?—rather than to go on with this harsh business of proving your son an idiot."

"I'm no an idiot, Mr Keelevin," exclaimed Walter, "though it seems to me that there's a thraw in the judgment o' the family, or my mother and brother would ne'er hae raised this stramash about my capacity to take care o' the

property. Didna I keep the cows frae the corn a' the last Ruglen Fair day, when Jock, the herd, got leave to gang in to try his luck and fortune at the roley-poleys?"

Honest Mr Keelevin wrung his hands at this.

"I'm sure, sir," said George in his sleekest manner, "that you must yourself, Mr Keelevin, be quite sensible that the inquiry ought to proceed to a verdict."

"I'm sensible o' nae sic things, Mr George," was the indignant answer. "Your brother is in as full possession of all his faculties as when your father executed the cursed entail, or when he was married to Kilmarkeckle's dochter."

"'Deed, Mr Keelevin," replied Walter, "ye're mista'en there; for I hae had twa teeth tuggit out for the toothache since syne, and I hae grown deaf in the left lug."

"Didna I tell you," said the worthy man angrily, "that ye werena to open your mouth?"

"Really, Mr Keelevin, I won'er to hear you," replied the natural, with great sincerity; "the mouth's the only trance-door[1] that I ken to the belly."

"Weel, weel," again exclaimed his friend, "mak a kirk and a mill o't; but be ruled by me, and let us draw up a reasonable agreement."

"I'm thinking, Mr Keelevin, that ye dinna ken that I hae made a paction with mysel' to sign nae

[1] *Trance-door.* The *trance* was the passage inside a house; and from it the kitchen was reached by the *trance-door.*

law-papers, for fear it be to the injury of Betty Bodle."

"Betty Bodle!" said Gabriel Pitwinnoch eagerly; "she has been long dead."

"Ah!" said Walter, "that's a' ye ken about it. She's baith living and lifelike."

Mr Keelevin was startled and alarmed at this, but abstained from saying anything. Gabriel also said nothing, but looked significantly to his client, who interposed and put an end to the conversation.

"Having gone so far," said he, "I could, with no respect for my own character, allow the proceedings to be now arrested. It is, therefore, unnecessary either to consider your suggestion or to hold any further debate here on the subject."

Mr Keelevin made no reply to this, but said that, as he had something to communicate in private to his client, he would carry him to Glasgow for that night. To so reasonable and so professional a proposal no objection was made. Walter himself also at once acquiesced, on the express condition that he was not to be obliged to sign any law-papers.

CHAPTER LVII

NEXT day, when the court again assembled, Walter was there, seated beside his agent and dressed in his best. Every eye was directed towards him; and the simple expression of wonder, mingled with anxiety, which the scene around him occasioned gave an air of so much intelligence to his features, which were regular, and indeed handsome, that he excited almost universal sympathy. Even Mr Threeper was perplexed when he saw him, at the proper time, rise from beside his friend, and, approaching the bottom of the table, make a slow and profound bow, first to the sheriff and then to the jury.

"You are Mr Walkinshaw, I believe?" said Mr Threeper.

"I believe I am," replied Walter timidly.

"What are you, Mr Walkinshaw?"

"A man, sir. My mother and brother want to mak me a daft ane."

"How do you suspect them of any such intention?"

"Because, ye see, I'm here. I wouldna hae been here but for that."

The countenance of honest Keelevin began to brighten, while that of George was clouded and overcast.

"Then you do not think you are a daft man?" said the advocate.

"Nobody thinks himsel' daft. I dare say ye think ye're just as wise as me."

A roar of laughter shook the court, and Threeper blushed and was disconcerted; but he soon resumed tartly—

"Upon my word, Mr Walkinshaw, you have a good opinion of yourself. I should like to know for what reason?"

"That's a droll question to speer at a man," replied Walter. "A poll parrot thinks weel o' itsel', which is but a feathered creature, and short o' the capacity of a man by twa hands."

Mr Keelevin trembled and grew pale; and the advocate, recovering full possession of his assurance, proceeded—

"And so ye think, Mr Walkinshaw, that the two hands make all the difference between a man and a parrot?"

"No, no, sir," replied Walter, "I dinna think that—for ye ken the beast has feathers."

"And why have not men feathers?"

"That's no a right question, sir, to put to the like o' me, a weak human creature. Ye should ask their Maker," said Walter gravely.

The advocate was again repulsed; Pitwinnoch

sat doubting the intelligence of his ears, and George shivering from head to foot; a buzz of satisfaction pervaded the whole court.

"Well, but, not to meddle with such mysteries," said Mr Threeper, assuming a jocular tone, "I suppose you think yourself a very clever fellow?"

"At some things," replied Walter modestly; "but I dinna like to make a roos[1] o' mysel'."

"And pray, now, Mr Walkinshaw, may I ask what do you think you do best?"

"Man! an' ye could see how I can sup curds and ream[2]—there's no ane in a' the house can ding me."

The sincerity and exultation with which this was expressed convulsed the court, and threw the advocate completely on his beam-ends. However, he soon righted, and proceeded—

"I don't doubt your ability in that way, Mr Walkinshaw; and I dare say you can play a capital knife and fork."

"I'm better at the spoon," replied Walter, laughing.

"Well, I must confess you are a devilish clever fellow."

"Mair sae, I'm thinking, than ye thought, sir. But noo, since," continued Walter, "ye hae speer't so many questions at me, will ye answer one yoursel'?"

"Oh, I can have no possible objection to do that, Mr Walkinshaw."

[1] *Roos.* Boast. [2] *Ream.* Cream.

"Then," said Walter, "how muckle are ye to get frae my brother for this job?"

Again the court was convulsed, and the questioner again disconcerted.

"I suspect, brother Threeper," said the sheriff, "that you are in the wrong box."

"I suspect so too," replied the advocate, laughing; but, addressing himself again to Walter, he said—

"You have been married, Mr Walkinshaw?"

"Ay, auld Doctor Denholm married me to Betty Bodle."

"And pray where is she?"

"Her mortal remains, as the headstone says, lie in the kirkyard."

The countenance of Mr Keelevin became pale and anxious. George and Pitwinnoch exchanged smiles of gratulation.

"You had a daughter?" said the advocate, looking knowingly to the jury, who sat listening with greedy ears.

"I had," said Walter, and glanced anxiously towards his trembling agent.

"And what became of your daughter?"

No answer was immediately given. Walter hung his head and seemed troubled; he sighed deeply, and again turned his eye inquiringly to Mr Keelevin. Almost every one present sympathised with his emotion, and ascribed it to parental sorrow.

"I say," resumed the advocate, "what became of your daughter?"

"I canna answer that question."

The simple accent in which this was uttered interested all in his favour still more and more.

"Is she dead?" said the pertinacious Mr Threeper.

"Folk said sae; and what everybody says maun be true."

"Then you don't, of your own knowledge, know the fact?"

"Before I can answer that, I would like to ken what a fact is."

The counsel shifted his ground, without noticing the question, and said—

"But I understand, Mr Walkinshaw, you have still a child that you call your Betty Bodle?"

"And what business hae ye wi' that?" said the natural, offended. "I never saw sic a stock o' impudence as ye hae in my life."

"I did not mean to offend you, Mr Walkinshaw; I was only anxious, for the ends of justice, to know if you consider the child you call Betty Bodle as your daughter?"

"I'm sure," replied Walter, "that the ends o' justice would be muckle better served an' ye would hae done wi' your speering."

"It is, I must confess, strange that I cannot get a direct answer from you, Mr Walkinshaw. Surely, as a parent, you should know your child!" exclaimed the advocate peevishly.

"An' I was a mother ye might say sae."

Mr Threeper began to feel that hitherto he

had made no impression; and forming an opinion of Walter's shrewdness far beyond what he was led to expect, he stooped and conferred a short time with Mr Pitwinnoch. On resuming his wonted posture he said—

"I do not wish, Mr Walkinshaw, to harass your feelings; but I am not satisfied with the answer you have given respecting your child, and I beg you will be a little more explicit. Is the little girl that lives with you your daughter?"

"I dinna like to gie you any satisfaction on that head, for Mr Keelevin said ye would bother me if I did."

"Ah!" exclaimed the triumphant advocate, "have I caught you at last?"

A murmur of disappointment ran through all the court, and Walter looked around coweringly and afraid.

"So, Mr Keelevin has primed you, has he? He has instructed you what to say?"

"No," said the poor natural; "he instructed me to say nothing."

"Then why did he tell you that I would bother you?"

"I dinna ken: speer at himsel'—there he sits."

"No, sir! I ask you," said the advocate grandly.

"I'm wearied, Mr Keelevin," said Walter helplessly as he looked towards his disconsolate agent. "May I no come away?"

The honest lawyer gave a deep sigh, to which all the spectators sympathisingly responded.

"Mr Walkinshaw," said the sheriff, "don't be alarmed—we are all friendly disposed towards you; but it is necessary, for the satisfaction of the jury, that you should tell us what you think respecting the child that lives with you."

Walter smiled and said, "I hae nae objection to converse wi' a weel-bred gentleman like you; but that barking terrier in the wig,—I can thole him no longer."

"Well, then," resumed the judge, "is the little girl your daughter?"

"'Deed is she—my ain dochter."

"How can that be, when, as you acknowledged, everybody said your dochter was dead?"

"But I kent better mysel'. My bairn and dochter, ye see, sir, was lang a weakly baby, aye bleating like a lambie that has lost its mother; and she dwined and dwindled, and moaned and grew sleepy sleepy, and then she closed her wee bonny een and lay still; and I sat beside her three days and three nights, watching her a' the time, never lifting my een frae her face, that was as sweet to look on as a gowan on a lown May morning. But—I kenna how it came to pass—I thought, as I looked at her, that she was changed, and there began to come a kirkyard smell frae the bed, that was just as if the hand o' Nature was wishing me to gae away; and then I saw, wi' the eye o' my heart, that my brother's wee Mary was grown my wee Betty Bodle, and so I gaed and brought her hame in my arms, and

she is noo my dochter. But my mother has gaen on like a randy at me ever sin' syne, and wants me to put away my ain bairn, which I will never, never do. No, sir, I'll stand by her, and guard her, though fifty mothers, and fifty times fifty brother Geordies, were to flyte at me frae morning to night."

One of the jury here interposed, and asked several questions relative to the management of the estate; by the answers to which it appeared not only that Walter had never taken any charge whatever, but that he was totally ignorant of business, and even of the most ordinary money transactions.

The jury then turned round and laid their heads together, the legal gentlemen spoke across the table, and Walter was evidently alarmed at the bustle. In the course of two or three minutes the foreman returned a verdict of fatuity.

The poor laird shuddered, and, looking at the sheriff, said, in an accent of simplicity that melted every heart, "Am I found guilty? Oh! surely, sir, ye'll no hang me, for I couldna help it."

CHAPTER LVIII

THE scene in the parlour of Grippy after the inquiry was of the most solemn and lugubrious description. The leddy sat in the great chair at the fireside, in all the pomp of woe, wiping her eyes, and ever and anon giving vent to the deepest soughs of sorrow. Mrs Charles, with her son leaning on her knee, occupied another chair, pensive and anxious. George and Mr Pitwinnoch sat at the table, taking an inventory of the papers in the scrutoire, and Walter was playfully tickling his adopted daughter on the green before the window, when Mrs Milrookit, with her husband, the laird of Dirdumwhamle, came to sympathise and condole with their friends, and to ascertain what would be the pecuniary consequences of the decision to them.

"Come awa, my dear," said the leddy to her daughter as she entered the room,—"come awa and tak a seat beside me. Your poor brother Watty has been weighed in the balance o' the sheriff and found wanting; and his vessels o' gold and silver, as I may say in the words o' Scripture, are carried away into captivity; for I understand

that George gets no proper right to them, as I expeckit, but is obligated to keep them in custody, in case Watty should hereafter come to years o' discretion. Hech, Meg! but this is a sair day for us a', and for nane mair sae than your afflicted gude-sister there and her twa bairns. She'll be under a needcessity to gang back and live again wi' my mother, now in her ninety-third year, and by course o' nature drawing near to her latter end."

"And what's to become of you?" replied Mrs Milrookit.

"Oh, I'll hae to bide here to tak care o' everything, and an aliment will be alloo't to me for keeping poor Watty. Hech, sirs! Wha would hae thought it, that sic a fine lad as he ance was, and preferred by his honest father as the best able to keep the property right, would thus hae been, by decreet o' court, proven a born idiot?"

"But," interrupted Mrs Milrookit, glancing compassionately towards her sister-in-law, "I think, since so little change is to be made, that ye might just as weel let Bell and her bairns bide wi' you, for my grandmother's income is little enough for her ain wants, now that she's in a manner bedrid."

"It's easy for you, Meg, to speak," replied her mother; "but if ye had an experiment o' the heavy handfu' they hae been to me, ye would hae mair compassion for your mother. It's surely a dispensation sair enough to hae the grief and

heart-breaking sight befote my eyes of a dementit lad that was so long a comfort to me in my widowhood. But it's the Lord's will, and I maun bend the knee o' resignation."

"Is't your intent, Mr George," said the laird o' Dirdumwhamle, "to mak any division o' what lying money there may hae been saved since your father's death?"

"I suspect there will not be enough to defray the costs of the process," replied George; "and if any balance should remain, the house really stands so much in need of repair that I am persuaded there will not be a farthing left."

"'Deed," said the leddy, "what he says, Mr Milrookit, is ouer true: the house is in a frail condition, for it was like pu'ing the teeth out o' the head o' Watty to get him to do what was needful."

"I think," replied the laird o' Dirdumwhamle, "that, since ye hae so soon come to the property, Mr George, and no likelihood o' any molestation in the possession, ye might let us a' share and share alike o' the gathering, and be at the outlay o' the repairs frae the rental."

To this suggestion Mr George, however, replied, "It will be time enough to consider that when the law expenses are paid."

"They'll be a heavy soom, Mr Milrookit," said the leddy; "weel do I ken frae my father's pleas what it is to pay law expenses. The like o' Mr Pitwinnoch there and Mr Keelevin are men o'

moderation and commonality in their charges; but yon awfu' folk wi' the cloaks o' darkness and the wigs o' wisdom, frae Edinbro'—they are costly commodities. But now that we're a' met here, I think it would be just as weel an' we war to settle at ance what I'm to hae, as the judicious curator o' Watty; for, by course o' law and nature, the aliment will begin frae this day."

"Yes," replied George, "I think it will be just as well; and I'm glad, mother, that you have mentioned it. What is your opinion, Mr Milrookit, as to the amount that she should have?"

"All things considered," replied the laird of Dirdumwhamle, prospectively contemplating some chance of a reversionary interest to his wife in the leddy's savings, "I think you ought not to make it less than a hundred pounds a year."

"A hundred pounds a year!" exclaimed the leddy; "that'll no buy saut to his kail. I hope and expeck no less than the whole half o' the rents; and they were last year weel on to four hunder."

"I think," said George to Mr Pitwinnoch, "I would not be justified to the court were I to give anything like that; but if you think I may, I can have no objection to comply with my mother's expectations."

"Oh, Mr Walkinshaw!" replied Gabriel, "you are no at a' aware o' your responsibility. You can do no such things. Your brother has been found a *fatuus*, and, of course, entitled but to

the plainest maintenance. I think that you will hardly be permitted to allow his mother more than fifty pounds,—if, indeed, so much."

"Fifty pounds! fifty placks!" cried the indignant leddy. "I'll let baith you and the sheriff ken I'm no to be 'frauded o' my rights in that gait. I'll no faik[1] a farthing o' a hundred and fifty."

"In that case, I fear," said Gabriel, "Mr George will be obliged to seek another custodier for the *fatuus,* as assuredly, mem, he'll ne'er be sanctioned to allow you anything like that."

"If ye think sae," interposed Mrs Milrookit, compassionating the forlorn estate of her sister-in-law, "I dare say Mrs Charles will be content to take him at a very moderate rate."

"Megsty me!" exclaimed the leddy. "Hae I been buying a pig in a poke like that? Is't a possibility that he can be ta'en out o' my hands, and no reasonable allowance made to me at a'? Surely, Mr Pitwinnoch, surely, Geordie, this can never stand either by the laws of God or man."

"I can assure you, Mrs Walkinshaw," replied the lawyer, "that fifty pounds a year is as much as I could venture to advise Mr George to give; and seeing it is sae, you had as well agree to it at once."

"I'll never agree to ony such thing. I'll gang intil Embro' mysel', and hae justice done me frae the Fifteen. I'll this very night consult Mr

[1] *I'll no faik.* I'll not lower my price.

Keelevin, who is a most just man, and o' a right partiality."

"I hope, mother," said George, "that you and I will not cast out about this; and to end all debates, if ye like, we'll leave the aliment to be settled by Mr Pitwinnoch and Mr Keelevin."

"Nothing can be fairer," observed the laird of Dirdumwhamle, in the hope Mr Keelevin might be so wrought on as to insist that at least a hundred should be allowed; and after some further altercation, the leddy grudgingly assented to this proposal.

"But," said Mrs Milrookit, "considering now the altered state of Watty's circumstances, I dinna discern how it is possible for my mother to uphold this house and the farm."

The leddy looked a little aghast at this fearful intimation, while George replied—

"I have reflected on that, Margaret, and I am quite of your opinion; and indeed it is my intention, after the requisite repairs are done to the house, to flit my family; for I am in hopes the change of air will be advantageous to my wife's health."

The leddy was thunderstruck and unable to speak, but her eyes were eloquent with indignation.

"Perhaps, after all, it would be as well for our mother," continued George, "to take up house at once in Glasgow; and as I mean to settle an annuity of fifty pounds on Mrs Charles, they could not do better that all live together."

All present but his mother applauded the liberality of George. To the young widow the intelligence of such a settlement was as fresh air to the captive; but before she could express her thankfulness Leddy Grippy started up and gave a tremendous stamp with her foot. She then resumed her seat, and appeared all at once calm and smiling; but it was a calm betokening no tranquillity, and a smile expressive of as little pleasure. In the course of a few seconds the hurricane burst forth, and alternately, with sobs and supplications, menaces, and knocking of nieves and drumming with her feet, the hapless Leddy Grippy divulged and expatiated on the plots and devices of George. But all was of no avail—her destiny was sealed; and long before Messrs Keelevin and Pitwinnoch adjusted the amount of the allowance—which, after a great struggle on the part of the former, was settled at seventy-five pounds—she found herself under the painful necessity of taking a flat up a turnpike stair in Glasgow for herself and the *fatuus*.

CHAPTER LIX

FOR some time after the decision of Walter's fatuity nothing important occurred in the history of the Grippy family. George pacified his own conscience, and gained the approbation of the world, by fulfilling the promise of settling fifty pounds per annum on his sister-in-law. The house was enlarged and adorned, and the whole estate, under the ancient name of Kittleston-heugh, began to partake of that general spirit of improvement which was then gradually diffusing itself over the face of the west country.

In the meantime Mrs Charles Walkinshaw, who had returned with her children to reside with their grandmother, found her situation comparatively comfortable; but an acute anxiety for the consequences that would ensue by the daily expected death of that gentlewoman continued to thrill through her bosom and chequer the sickly gleam of the uncertain sunshine that glimmered in her path. At last the old lady died, and she was reduced, as she had long foreseen, with her children, to the parsimonious annuity. As it was impossible for her to live in Glasgow, and educate

her children, on so small a stipend, there, she retired to one of the neighbouring villages, where, in the family of the Reverend Mr Eadie, the minister, she found that kind of quiet intelligent society which her feelings and her misfortunes required.

Mrs Eadie was a Highland lady, and, according to the living chronicles of the region of clans and traditions, she was of scarcely less than illustrious birth. But for the last attempt to restore the royal line of the Stuarts, she would, in all probability, have moved in a sphere more spacious and suitable to the splendour of her pedigree than the humble and narrow orbit of a country clergyman's wife. Nor, in her appearance, did it seem that Nature and Fortune were agreed about her destiny; for the former had adorned her youth with the beauty, the virtues, and the dignity which command admiration in the palace—endowments but little consonant to the lowly duties of the rural manse.

At the epoch of which we are now speaking she was supposed to have passed her fiftieth year; but something in her air and manner gave her the appearance of being older: a slight shade of melancholy, the pale cast of thought, lent sweetness to the benign composure of her countenance; and she was seldom seen without inspiring interest and awakening sentiments of profound and reverential respect. She had lost her only daughter about a year before; and a son, her remaining

child, a boy about ten years of age, was supposed to have inherited the malady which carried off his sister. The anxiety which Mrs Eadie in consequence felt as a mother partly occasioned that mild sadness of complexion to which we have alluded; but there was still a deeper and more affecting cause.

Before the ruin of her father's fortune by the part he took in the Rebellion, she was betrothed to a youth who united many of the best Lowland virtues with the gallantry and enthusiasm peculiar to the Highlanders of that period. It was believed that he had fallen in the fatal field of Culloden; and, after a long period of virgin widowhood on his account, she was induced, by the amiable manners and gentle virtues of Mr Eadie, to consent to change her life. He was then tutor in the family of a relation with whom, on her father's forfeiture and death, she had found an asylum; and when he was presented to the parish of Camrachle they were married.

The first seven years from the date of their union were spent in that temperate state of enjoyment which is nearest to perfect happiness; during the course of which their two children were born. In that time no symptom of the latent poison of the daughter's constitution appeared; but all around them, and in their prospects, was calm, and green, and mild, and prosperous.

In the course of the summer of the eighth

year, in consequence of an often-repeated invitation, they went, at the meeting of the General Assembly, to which Mr Eadie was returned a member, to spend a short time with a relation in Edinburgh; and among the strangers with whom they happened to meet at the houses of their friends were several from France, children and relations of some of those who had been out in the Forty-five.

A young gentleman belonging to these expatriated visitors one evening interested Mrs Eadie to so great a degree that she requested to be particularly introduced to him; and, in the course of conversation, she learned that he was the son of her former lover, and that his father was still alive, and married to a Frenchwoman, his mother. The shock which this discovery produced was so violent that she was obliged to leave the room, and falling afterwards into bad health, her singular beauty began to fade with premature decay.

Her husband, to whom she disclosed her grief, endeavoured to soften it by all the means and blandishments in his power, but it continued so long inveterate that he yielded himself to the common weakness of our nature, and, growing peevish at her sorrow, chided her melancholy till their domestic felicity was mournfully impaired.

Such was the state in which Mrs Charles Walkinshaw found Mrs Eadie at their first ac-

quaintance; and the disappointments and shadows which had fallen on the hopes of her own youth soon led to an intimate and sympathetic friendship between them, the influence of which contributed at once to alleviate their reciprocal griefs and to have the effect of reviving, in some degree, the withered affections of the minister. The gradual and irremediable progress of the consumption which preyed on his son soon, however, claimed from that gentle and excellent man efforts of higher fortitude than he had before exerted; and from that inward exercise, and the sympathy which he felt for his wife's maternal solicitude, Mrs Walkinshaw had the satisfaction, in the course of a year, to see their mutual confidence and cordiality restored. But in the same period the boy died; and though the long-foreseen event deeply affected his parents, it proved a fortunate occurrence to the widow; for the minister, to withdraw his reflections from the contemplation of his childless state, undertook the education of James, and Mrs Eadie, partly from the same motives, but chiefly to enjoy the society of her friend, proposed to unite with her in the education of Mary. "We cannot tell," said she to Mrs Walkinshaw, "what her lot may be; but let us do our best to prepare her for the world, and leave her fortunes, as they ever must be, in the hands of Providence. The penury and obscurity of her present condition ought to be no objection to bestowing on her all the accom-

plishments we have it in our power to give. How little likely was it, in my father's time, that I should have been in this comparative poverty; and yet, but for those acquirements, which were studied for brighter prospects, how dark and sad would often have been my residence in this sequestered village!"

CHAPTER LX

In the meantime the fortunes of George, whom we now regard as the third laird of Grippy, continued to flourish. The estate rose in value and his mercantile circumstances improved; but still the infirmities of his wife's health remained the same, and the want of a male heir was a craving void in his bosom that no prosperity could supply.

The reflections connected with this subject were rendered the more afflicting by the consideration that, in the event of dying without a son, the estate would pass from his daughter to James, the son of his brother Charles; and the only consolation that he had to balance this was a hope that perhaps, in time, he might be able to bring to pass a marriage between them. Accordingly, after a suspension of intercourse for several years, actuated by a prospective design of this kind, he, one afternoon, made his appearance in his own carriage, with his lady and daughter, at the door of Mrs Charles's humble dwelling in the village of Camrachle.

"I am afraid," said he, after they were all seated in her little parlour, the window of which was curtained without with honeysuckle and jessamine,

and the grate filled with flowers—"I am afraid, my dear sister, that unless we occasionally renew our intercourse the intimacy will be lost between our families, which it ought to be the interest of friends to preserve. Mrs Walkinshaw and I have, therefore, come to request that you and the children will spend a few days with us at Kittlestonheugh; and, if you do not object, we shall invite our mother and Walter to join you,—you would be surprised to hear how much the poor fellow still dotes on the recollection of your Mary, as Betty Bodle, and bewails, because the law, as he says, has found him guilty of being daft, that he should not be allowed to see her."

This visit and invitation were so unexpected that even Mrs Charles, who was of the most gentle and confiding nature, could not avoid suspecting they were dictated by some unexplained purpose; but adversity had long taught her that she was only as a reed in the world, and must stoop as the wind blew. She readily agreed, therefore, to spend a few days at the mansion-house, and the children, who were present, eagerly expressing a desire to see their uncle Walter, of whose indulgence and good-nature they retained the liveliest recollection, it was arranged that, on the Monday following, the carriage should be sent for her and them, and that the leddy and Walter should also be at Kittlestonheugh to meet them.

In the evening after this occurrence Mrs

Charles went to the manse, and communicated to the minister and Mrs Eadie what had happened. They knew her story, and were partly acquainted with the history of the strange and infatuated entail. Like her, they believed that her family had been entirely cut off from the succession, and, like her, too, they respected the liberality of George in granting her the annuity, small as it was. His character, indeed, stood fair and honourable with the world; he was a partner in one of the most eminent concerns in the royal city; his birth and the family estate placed him in the first class of her sons and daughters,—that stately class who, though entirely devoted to the pursuit of lucre, still held their heads high as ancestral gentry. But after a suspension of intercourse for so long a period, so sudden a renewal of intimacy, and with a degree of cordiality never before evinced, naturally excited their wonder and awakened their conjectures. Mrs Eadie, superior and high-minded herself, ascribed it to the best intentions. "Your brother-in-law," said she, "is feeling the generous influence of prosperity, and is sensible that it must redound to his personal advantage with the world to continue towards you, on an enlarged scale, that friendship which you have already experienced."

But the minister, who, from his humbler birth, and the necessity which it imposed on him to contemplate the movements of society from below,

together with that acquired insight of the hidden workings of the heart, occasionally laid open in the confessional moments of contrition, when his assistance was required at the deathbeds of his parishioners, appeared to entertain a different opinion.

"I hope his kindness proceeds from so good a source," said he; "but I should have been better satisfied had it run in a constant stream, and not, after such an entire occultation, burst forth so suddenly. It is either the result of considerations with respect to things already passed, recently impressed upon him in some new manner, or springs from some sinister purpose that he has in view; and therefore, Mrs Walkinshaw, though it may seem harsh in me to suggest so ill a return for such a demonstration of brotherly regard, I would advise you, on account of your children, to observe to what it tends."

In the meantime George, with his lady and daughter, had proceeded to his mother's residence in Virginia Street, to invite her and Walter to join Mrs Charles and the children.

His intercourse with her, after her domiciliation in the town had been established, was restored to the freest footing; for although, in the first instance, and in the most vehement manner, she declared that "he had cheated her, and deprived Walter of his lawful senses; and that she ne'er would open her lips to him again," he had, nevertheless, contrived to make his peace by sending

her presents and paying her the most marked deference and respect; lamenting that the hard conditions of his situation as a trustee did not allow him to be in other respects more liberal. But still the embers of suspicion were not extinguished; and when, on this occasion, he told her where he had been and the immediate object of his visit, she could not refrain from observing that it was a very wonderful thing.

"Dear keep me, Geordie!" said she, "what's in the wind noo, that ye hae been galloping awa' in your new carriage to invite Bell Fatherlans and her weans to Grippy?"

George, eager to prevent her observations, interrupted her, saying—

"I am surprised, mother, that you still continue to call the place Grippy. You know it is properly Kittlestonheugh."

"To be sure," replied the leddy, "since my time and your worthy father's time it has undergone a great transmogrification,—what wi' your dining-rooms, and what wi' your drawing-rooms, and your new back jambs and your wings."

"Why, mother, I have but as yet built only one of the wings," said he.

"And enough too!" exclaimed the leddy. "Geordie, tak my word for't, it'll a' flee fast enough away wi' ae wing. Howsever, I'll no objeck to the visitation, for I hae had a sort o' wish to see my grandchilder, which is very natural I should hae. Nae doot, by this time

they are grown braw bairns; and their mother was aye a genty bodie, though, in a sense, mair for ornament than use."

Walter, who during this conversation was sitting in his father's easy-chair, that had, among other chattels, been removed from Grippy, swinging backward and forwards, and occasionally throwing glances towards the visitors, said—

"And is my Betty Bodle to be there?"

"Oh, yes!" replied George, glad to escape from his mother's remarks; "and you'll be quite delighted to see her. She is uncommonly tall for her age."

"I dinna like that," said Walter; "she shouldna hae grown ony bigger; for I dinna like big folk."

"And why not?"

"'Cause, ye ken, Geordie, the law's made only for them; and if you and me had aye been twa wee brotherly laddies, playing on the gowany brae, as we used to do, ye would ne'er hae thought o' bringing yon Cluty's claw frae Enbro' to prove me guilty of daftness."

"I'm sure, Watty," said George, under the twinge which he suffered from the observation, "that I could not do otherwise. It was required from me equally by what was due to the world and to my mother."

"It may be sae," replied Walter; "but, as I'm daft, ye ken I dinna understand it." And he again resumed his oscillations.

After some further conversation on the subject of the proposed visit, in which George arranged that he should call on Monday for his mother and Walter in the carriage, and take them out to the country with him, he took his leave.

CHAPTER LXI

ON the same evening on which George and his family visited Mrs Charles at Camrachle, and while she was sitting in the manse parlour, Mrs Eadie received a letter by the post. It was from her cousin Frazer (who, as heir-male of Frazer of Glengael, her father's house, would, but for the forfeiture, have been his successor), and it was written to inform her that, among other forfeited properties, the Glengael estate was to be soon publicly sold, and that he was making interest, according to the custom of the time, and the bearing in the minds of the Scottish gentry in general towards the unfortunate adherents of the Stuarts, to obtain a private preference at the sale; also begging that she would come to Edinburgh and assist him in the business, some of their mutual friends and relations having thought that, perhaps, she might herself think of concerting the means to make the purchase.

At one time, undoubtedly, the hereditary affections of Mrs Eadie would have prompted her to have made the attempt; but the loss of her children extinguished all the desire she had ever

cherished on the subject, and left her only the wish that her kinsman might succeed. Nevertheless, she was too deeply under the influence of the clannish sentiments peculiar to the Highlanders not to feel that a compliance with Frazer's request was a duty. Accordingly, as soon as she read the letter she handed it to her husband, at the same time saying—

"I am glad that this has happened when we are about to lose for a time the society of Mrs Walkinshaw. We shall set out for Edinburgh on Monday, the day she leaves this, and perhaps we may be able to return about the time she expects to be back. For I feel," she added, turning towards her, "that your company has become an essential ingredient to our happiness."

Mr Eadie was so much surprised at the decision with which his wife spoke, and the firmness with which she proposed going to Edinburgh, without reference to what he might be inclined to do, that instead of reading the letter he looked at her anxiously for a moment,—perhaps recollecting the unpleasant incident of their former visit to the metropolis,—and said, "What has occurred?"

"Glengael is to be sold," she replied; "and my cousin Frazer is using all the influence he can to prevent any one from bidding against him. Kindness towards me deters some of our mutual friends from giving him their assistance, and he wishes my presence in Edinburgh to remove their scruples, and otherwise to help him."

"You can do that as well by letter as in person," said the minister, opening the letter; "for, indeed, this year we cannot so well afford the expenses of such a journey."

"The honour of my father's house is concerned in this business," replied the lady calmly but proudly; "and there is no immediate duty to interfere with what I owe to my family as the daughter of Glengael."

Mrs Walkinshaw had from her first interview admired the august presence and lofty sentiments of Mrs Eadie; but nothing had before occurred to afford her even a glimpse of her dormant pride and sleeping energies, the sinews of a spirit capable of heroic and masculine effort, and she felt for a moment awed by the incidental disclosure of a power and resolution that she had never once imagined to exist beneath the calm and equable sensibility which constituted the general tenor of her friend's character.

When the minister had read the letter, he again expressed his opinion that it was unnecessary to go to Edinburgh; but Mrs Eadie, without entering into any observation on his argument, said—

"On second thoughts, it may not be necessary for you to go; but I must. I am summoned by my kinsman; and it is not for me to question the propriety of what he asks, but only to obey. It is the cause of my father's house."

The minister smiled at her determination, and said, "I suppose there is nothing else for me but

also to obey. I do not, however, recollect who this Frazer is. Was he out with your father in the Forty-five?"

"No; but his father was," replied Mrs Eadie, "and was likewise executed at Carlisle. He himself was bred to the Bar, and is an advocate in Edinburgh." And, turning suddenly round to Mrs Walkinshaw, she added solemnly, "There is something in this. There is some mysterious link between the fortunes of your family and mine. It has brought your brother-in-law here to-day, as if a new era were begun to you, and also this letter of auspicious omen to the blood of Glengael."

Mr Eadie laughingly remarked that he had not for a long time heard from her such a burst of Highland lore.

But Mrs Walkinshaw was so affected by the solemnity with which it had been expressed that she inadvertently said, "I hope in heaven it may be so."

"I am persuaded it is," rejoined Mrs Eadie, still serious; and emphatically taking her by the hand, she said, "The minister dislikes what he calls my Highland freats,[1] and believes they have their source in some dark remnants of pagan superstition: on that account I abstain from speaking of many things that I see, —the signs and forecoming shadows of events. Nevertheless my faith in them is none shaken, for the spirit has more

[1] *Freats.* Superstitions.

faculties than the five senses, by which, among other things, the heart is taught to love or hate, it knows not wherefore. Mark, therefore, my words, and bear them in remembrance: from this day the fortunes of Glengael are mingled with those of your house. The lights of both have been long set; but the time is coming when they shall again shine in their brightness."

"I should be incredulous no more," replied the minister, "if you could persuade her brother-in-law, Mr George Walkinshaw, to help Frazer with a loan towards the sum required for the purchase of Glengael."

Perceiving, however, that he was treading too closely on a tender point, he turned the conversation, and nothing more particular occurred that evening. The interval between then and Monday was occupied by the two families in little preparations for their respective journeys: Mr Eadie, notwithstanding the pecuniary inconvenience, having agreed to accompany his wife.

In the meantime, George, for some reason best known to himself, it would appear, had resolved to make the visit of so many connections a festival; for, on the day after he had been at Camrachle, he wrote to his brother-in-law, the laird of Dirdumwhamle, to join the party with Mrs Milrookit, and to bring their son with them, — a circumstance which, when he mentioned it to his mother, only served to make her suspect that more was meant than met either the eye or ear in such extra-

ordinary kindness; and the consequence was that she secretly resolved to take the advice of Mr Keelevin as to how she ought to conduct herself; for, from the time of his warsle, as she called it, with Pitwinnoch for the aliment, he had regained her good opinion. She had also another motive for being desirous of conferring with him,—no less than a laudable wish to have her will made, especially as the worthy lawyer, now far declined into the vale of years, had been for some time in ill health, and unable to give regular attendance to his clients at the office: "symptoms," as the leddy said when she heard it, "that he felt the cauld hand o' Death muddling about the root o' life, and a warning, to a' that wanted to profit by his skill, no to slumber and sleep like the foolish virgins, that alloo't their cruses to burn out, and were wakened to desperation when the shout got up that the bridegroom and the musickers were coming."

But the worthy lawyer, when she called, was in no condition to attend any longer to worldly concerns—a circumstance which she greatly deplored, as she mentioned it to her son George. He, however, was far from sympathising with her anxiety; on the contrary, the news, perhaps, afforded him particular satisfaction. For he was desirous that the world should continue to believe his elder brother had been entirely disinherited, and Mr Keelevin was the only person that he thought likely to set the heirs in that respect right.

CHAPTER LXII

ON the day appointed, the different members of the Grippy family assembled at Kittlestonheugh. Mrs Charles and her two children were the last that arrived; and during the drive from Camrachle both James and Mary repeated many little instances of Walter's kindness,—so lasting are the impressions of affection received in the artless and heedless hours of childhood,—and they again anticipated, from the recollection of his good nature, a long summer day with him of frolic and mirth.

But they were now several years older, and they had undergone that unconscious change by which, though the stores of memory are unaltered, the moral being becomes another creature, and can no longer feel towards the same object as it once felt. On alighting from the carriage they bounded with light steps and jocund hearts in quest of their uncle; but when they saw him sitting by himself in the garden they paused, and were disappointed.

They recognised in him the same person whom they formerly knew; but they had heard he was daft, and they beheld him stooping forward, with

his hands sillily hanging between his knees, and he appeared melancholy and helpless.

"Uncle Watty," said James compassionately, "what for are ye sitting there alone?"

Watty looked up, and gazing at him vacantly for a few seconds, said, "'Cause naebody will sit wi' me, for I am a daft man." He then drooped his head, and sank into the same listless posture in which they had found him.

"Do ye no ken me?" said Mary.

He again raised his eyes, and alternately looked at them both, eagerly and suspiciously. Mary appeared to have outgrown his recollection, for he turned from her; but after some time he began to discover James, and a smile of curious wonder gradually illuminated his countenance, and developed itself into a broad grin of delight as he said—

"What a heap o' meat, Jamie Walkinshaw, ye maun hae eaten to mak you sic a muckle laddie!" and he drew the boy towards him, to caress him as he had formerly done; but the child, escaping from his hands, retired several paces backward, and eyed him with pity, mingled with disgust.

Walter appeared struck with his look and movement, and again folding his hands, dropped them between his knees, and hung his head, saying to himself, "But I'm daft: naebody cares for me noo; I'm a cumberer o' the ground, and a' my Betty Bodles are ta'en away."

The accent in which this was expressed touched

the natural tenderness of the little girl, and she went up to him and said, "Uncle, I'm your wee Betty Bodle; what for will ye no speak to me?"

His attention was again roused, and he took her by the hand, and, gently stroking her head, said, "Ye're a bonny flower, a lily-like leddy, and leal in the heart and kindly in the e'e; but ye're no my Betty Bodle." Suddenly, however, something in the cast of her countenance reminded him so strongly of her more childish appearance that he caught her in his arms and attempted to dandle her; but the action was so violent that it frightened the child, and she screamed, and, struggling out of his hands, ran away. James followed her; and their attention being soon drawn to other objects, poor Walter was left neglected by all during the remainder of the forenoon.

At dinner he was brought in and placed at the table, with one of the children on each side; but he paid them no attention.

"What's come o'er thee, Watty?" said his mother. "I thought ye would hae been out o' the body wi' your Betty Bodle; but ye ne'er let on ye see her."

"'Cause she's like a' the rest," said he sorrowfully. "She canna abide me; for, ye ken, I'm daft. It's surely an awfu' leprosy, this daftness, that it gars everybody flee me; but I canna help it. It's no my fau't, but the Maker's that made me, and the laws that found me guilty. But, Geordie," he

added, turning to his brother, "what's the use o' letting me live in this world, doing naething, and gude for naething?"

Mrs Charles felt her heart melt within her at the despondency with which this was said, and endeavoured to console him; he, however, took no notice of her attentions, but sat seemingly absorbed in melancholy, and heedless to the endeavours which even the compassionate children made to induce him to eat.

"No," said he; "I'll no eat ony mair: it's even-down wastrie for sic a useless set-by thing as the like o' me to consume the fruits o' the earth. The cost o' my keep would be a braw thing to Bell Fatherlans; so I hope, Geordie, ye'll mak it ouer to her: for when I gae hame I'll lie doun and die."

"Haud thy tongue, and no fright folk wi' sic blethers!" exclaimed his mother; "but eat your dinner, and gang out to the green and play wi' the weans."

"An' I werena a daft creature, naebody would bid me play wi' weans; and the weans ken that I am sae, and mak a fool o' me for't. I dinna like to be everybody's fool. I'm sure the law, when it found me guilty, might hae alloo't me a mair merciful punishment. Meg Wilcat, that stealt Provost's Murdoch's cocket-hat, and was whippit for't at the Cross, was pitied wi' many a watery e'e; but everybody dauds and dings[1] the daft laird o' Grippy."

[1] *Dauds and dings.* Strikes and knocks about.

"Na! as I'm to be trusted," exclaimed the leddy, "if I dinna think, Geordie, that the creature's coming to its senses again!" And she added, laughing, "And what will come o' your braw policy, and your planting and plenishing? for ye'll hae to gie't back, and count in the court to the last bawbee for a' the rental besides."

George was never more at a loss than for an answer to parry this thrust; but, fortunately for him, Walter rose and left the room, and, as he had taken no dinner, his mother followed, to remonstrate with him against the folly of his conduct. Her exhortations and her menaces, however, were equally ineffectual. The poor natural was not to be moved: he felt his own despised and humiliated state; and the expectation which he had formed of the pleasure he was to enjoy in again being permitted to caress and fondle his Betty Bodle was so bitterly disappointed that it cut him to the heart. No persuasion, no promise, could entice him to return to the dining-room; but a settled and riveted resolution to go back to Glasgow obliged his mother to desist, and allow him to take his own way. He accordingly quitted the house, and immediately on arriving at home went to bed. Overpowered by the calls of hunger, he was next day allured to take some food; and from day to day after, for several years, he was in the same manner tempted to eat; but all power of volition, from the period of the visit, appeared to have become extinct within him.

His features suffered a melancholy change, and he never spoke, nor did he seem to recognise any one; but gradually, as it were, the whole of his mind and intellect ebbed away, leaving scarcely the merest instincts of life. But the woeful form which nature assumes in the deathbed of fatuity admonishes us to draw the curtain over the last scene of poor Watty.

CHAPTER LXIII

IN the foregoing chapter we were led, by our regard for the simple affections and harmless character of the second laird, to overstep a period of several years. We must now, in consequence, return, and resume the narrative from the time that Walter retired from the company; but, without entering too minutely into the other occurrences of the day, we may be allowed to observe, in the sage words of the leddy, that the party enjoyed themselves with as much insipidity as is commonly found at the formal feasts of near relations.

Mrs Charles Walkinshaw, put on her guard by the conjectures of the minister of Camrachle, soon perceived an evident partiality on the part of her brother-in-law towards her son, and that he took particular pains to make the boy attentive to Robina, as his daughter was called. Indeed, the design of George was so obvious, and the whole proceedings of the day so peculiarly marked, that even the leddy could not but observe them.

"I'm thinking," said she, "that the seeds of a matrimony are sown among us this day, for

Geordie's a far-before-looking soothsayer, and a Chaldee excellence like his father; and a body doesna need an e'e in the neck to discern that he's just wising and wiling for a purpose of marriage hereafter between Jamie and Beenie. Gude speed the wark! for really we hae had but little luck among us since the spirit o' disinheritance got the upper hand; and it would be a great comfort if a' sores could be salved and healed in the fulness of time, when the weans can be married according to law."

"I do assure you, mother," replied her dutiful son, "that nothing would give me greater pleasure; and I hope that, by the frequent renewal of these little cordial and friendly meetings, we may help forward so desirable an event."

"But," replied the old leddy piously, "marriages are made in heaven; and unless there has been a booking among the angels above, a' that can be done by man below, even to the crying, for the third and last time, in the kirk, will be only a thrashing the water and a raising of bells. Howsever, the prayers of the righteous availeth much; and we should a' endeavour, by our walk and conversation, to compass a work so meet for repentance until it's brought to a come-to-pass. So I hope, Bell Fatherlans, that ye'll up and be doing in this good work, watching and praying, like those who stand on the tower of Siloam looking towards Lebanon."

"I think," said Mrs Charles, smiling, "that you

are looking far forward. The children are still but mere weans, and many a day must pass over their green heads before such a project ought even to be thought of."

"It's weel kent, Bell," replied her mother-in-law, "that ye were ne'er a queen of Sheba, either for wisdom or forethought; but I hae heard my friend that's awa—your worthy father, Geordie—often say, That as the twig is bent the tree's inclined, which is a fine sentiment, and should teach us to set about our undertakings with a knowledge of better things than of silver and gold, in order that we may be enabled to work the work o' Providence."

But just as the leddy was thus expatiating away in high solemnity, a dreadful cry arose among the preordained lovers. The children had quarrelled; and, notwithstanding all the admonitions which they had received to be kind to one another, Miss Robina had given James a slap on the face, which he repaid with such instantaneous energy that, during the remainder of the visit, they were never properly reconciled.

Other causes were also in operation, destined to frustrate the long-forecasting prudence of her father. Mr and Mrs Eadie, on their arrival at Edinburgh, took up their abode with her relation, Mr Frazer, the intending purchaser of Glengael; and they had not been many days in his house till they came to the determination to adopt Ellen, his eldest daughter, who was then about

the age of James. Accordingly, after having promoted the object of their journey, when they returned to the manse of Camrachle they were allowed to take Ellen with them; and the intimacy which arose among the children in the progress of time ripened into love between her and James. For, although his uncle, in the prosecution of his own purpose, often invited the boy to spend several days together with his cousin at Kittlestonheugh, and did everything in his power during those visits to inspire the children with a mutual affection, their distaste for each other seemed only to increase.

Robina was sly and demure, observant, quiet, and spiteful. Ellen, on the contrary, was full of buoyancy and glee, playful and generous, qualities which assimilated much more with the dispositions of James than those of his cousin; so that, long before her beauty had awakened passion, she was to him a more interesting and delightful companion.

The amusements also at Camrachle were more propitious to the growth of affection than those at Kittlestonheugh, where everything was methodised into system, and, if the expression may be allowed, the genius of design and purpose controlled and repressed nature. The lawn was preserved in a state of neatness too trim for the gambols of childhood, and the walks were too winding for the straightforward impulses of its freedom and joy. At Camrachle the fields were open, and

their expanse unbounded. The sun, James often thought, shone brighter there than at Kittleston-heugh: the birds sang sweeter in the wild broom than in his uncle's shrubbery; and the moonlight glittered like gladness in the burns, but on the wide water of the Clyde it was always dull and silent.

There are few situations more congenial to the diffusion of tenderness and sensibility—the elements of affection—than the sunny hills and clear waters of a rural neighbourhood, and few of all the beautiful scenes of Scotland excel the environs of Camrachle. The village stands on the slope of a gentle swelling ground, and consists of a single row of scattered thatched cottages, behind which a considerable stream carries its tributary waters to the Cart. At the east end stands the little church, in the centre of a small cemetery, and close to it the modest mansion of the minister. The house which Mrs Walkinshaw occupied was a slated cottage near the manse. It was erected by a native of the village, who had made a moderate competency as a tradesman in Glasgow; and, both in point of external appearance and internal accommodation, it was much superior to any other of the same magnitude in the parish. A few ash-trees rose among the gardens, and several of them were tufted with the nests of magpies, the birds belonging to which had been so long in the practice of resorting there that they were familiar to all the children of the village.

But the chief beauty in the situation of Camrachle is a picturesque and extensive bank, shaggy with hazel, along the foot of which runs the stream already mentioned. The green and gowany brow of this romantic terrace commands a wide and splendid view of all the champaign district of Renfrewshire. And it was often observed by the oldest inhabitants that, whenever any of the natives of the clachan had been long absent, the first spot they visited on their return was the crown of this bank, where they had spent the sunny days of their childhood. Here the young Walkinshaws and Ellen Frazer also instinctively resorted, and their regard for each other was not only ever after endeared by the remembrance of their early pastimes there, but associated with delightful recollections of glorious summer sunshine, the fresh green mornings of spring, and the golden evenings of autumn.

CHAPTER LXIV

As James approached his fourteenth year, his uncle, still with a view to a union with Robina, proposed that, when Mr Eadie thought his education sufficient for the mercantile profession, he should be sent to his counting-house. But the early habits and the tenor of the lessons he had received were not calculated to ensure success to James as a merchant. He was robust, handsome, and adventurous, fond of active pursuits, and had imbibed from the Highland spirit of Mrs Eadie a tinge of romance and enthusiasm. The bias of his character, the visions of his reveries, and the cast of his figure and physiognomy were decidedly military. But the field of heroic enterprise was then vacant: the American war was over, and all Europe slumbered in repose, unconscious of the hurricane that was then gathering; and thus, without any consideration of his own inclinations and instincts, James, like many of those who afterwards distinguished themselves in the great conflict, acceded to the proposal.

He had not, however, been above three or four years settled in Glasgow when his natural dis-

taste for sedentary and regular business began to make him dislike the place; and his repugnance was heightened almost to disgust by the discovery of his uncle's sordid views with respect to him. Nor, on the part of his cousin, was the design better relished; for, independent of an early and ungracious antipathy, she had placed her affections on another object, and more than once complained to the old leddy of her father's tyranny in so openly urging on a union that would render her miserable,—especially, as she said, when her cousin's attachment to Ellen Frazer was so unequivocal. But Leddy Grippy had set her mind on the match as strongly as her son, and, in consequence, neither felt nor showed any sympathy for Robina.

"Never fash your head," she said to her one day, when the young lady was soliciting her mediation, "Never fash your head, Beenie, my dear, about Jamie's calf-love for yon daffodil, but be an obedient child, and walk in the paths of pleasantness that ye're ordain't to, by both me and your father; for we hae had ouer lang a divided family, and it's full time we were brought to a cordial understanding with one another."

"But," replied the disconsolate damsel, "even though he had no previous attachment, I'll ne'er consent to marry him, for really I can never fancy him."

"And what for can ye no fancy him?" cried

the leddy. "I would like to ken that. But, to be plain wi' you, Beenie, it's a shame to hear a weel-educated miss like you, brought up wi' a Christian principle, speaking about fancying young men. Sic a thing was never alloo't nor heard tell o' in my day and generation. But that comes o' your ganging to see *Douglas* tragedy, at that kirk o' Satan in Dunlop Street,[1] where, as I am most creditably informed, the playactors court ane another afore a' the folk."

"I am sure you have yourself experienced," replied Robina, "what it is to entertain a true affection, and to know that our wishes and inclinations are not under our own control. How would you have liked had your father forced you to marry a man against your will?"

"Lassie, lassie!" exclaimed the leddy, "if ye live to be a grandmother like me, ye'll ken the right sense o' a lawful and tender affection. But there's no sincerity noo like the auld sincerity: when me and your honest grandfather, that was in mine, and is now in Abraham's bosom, came thegither, we had no foistring and parleyvooing, like your novelle turtle-doves, but discoursed in a sober and wise-like manner anent the cost and charge o' a family; and the upshot was a visibility of solid cordiality and kindness, very different, Beenie, my dear, frae the puff-paste love o' your Clarissy Harlots."

"Ah! but your affection was mutual from the

[1] Note B.

beginning. You were not perhaps devoted to another?"

"Gude guide us, Beenie Walkinshaw! are ye devoted to another? Damon and Phillis, pastorauling at hide and seek wi' their sheep, was the height o' discretion compared wi' sic curdooing. My lass, I'll let no grass grow beneath my feet till I hae gi'en your father notice o' this loup-the-window and hey-cockalorum-like love."

"Impossible!" exclaimed the young lady. "You will never, surely, be so rash as to betray me?"

"Wha is't wi'? But I needna speer; for I'll be none surprised to hear that it's a playactor, or a soldier-officer, or some other clandestine poetical."

Miss possessed more shrewdness than her grandmother gave her credit for, and, perceiving the turn and tendency of their conversation, she exerted all her address to remove the impression which she had thus produced, by affecting to laugh, saying—

"What has made you suppose that I have formed any improper attachment? I was only anxious that you should speak to my father, and try to persuade him that I can never be happy with my cousin."

"How can I persuade him o' ony sic havers? Or how can ye hope that I would if it was in my power, when ye know what a comfort it will be to us a' to see such a prudent purpose o' marriage brought to perfection? Na, na, Beenie; ye're an

instrument in the hands o' Providence to bring aboot a great blessing to your family; and I would be as daft as your uncle Watty, when he gaed out to shoot the flees, were I to set mysel' an adversary to such a righteous ordinance. So you maun just mak up your mind to conform. My word, but ye're weel aff to be married in your teens: I was past thirty before man speer't my price!"

"But," said Robina, "you forget that James himself has not yet consented. I am sure he is devoted to Ellen Frazer, and that he will never consent."

"Weel, I declare if e'er I heard the like of sic upsetting! I won'er what business either you or him hae to consenting or non-consenting. Is't no the pleasure o' your parentage that ye're to be married, and will ye dare to commit the sin of disobedient children? Beenie Walkinshaw, had I said sic a word to my father, who was a man o' past-ordinar sense, weel do I ken what I would hae gotten. I only just ance in a' my life, in a mistak', gied him a contradiction, and he declared that, had I been a son as I was but a dochter, he would hae grippit me by the cuff o' the neck and the back o' the breeks and shuttled me through the window. But the end o' the world is drawing near, and corruption's working daily to a head; a' modesty and maidenhood has departed frae womankind, and the sons of men are workers of iniquity—priests o' Baal,

and transgressors every one. A', therefore, my leddy, that I hae to say to you is a word o' wisdom, and they ca't Conform—Beenie, conform —and obey the fifth commandment."

Robina, however, was in no degree changed by her grandmother's exhortations and animadversions; on the contrary, she was determined to take her own way—which is a rule that we would recommend to all young ladies, as productive of the happiest consequences in cases of the tender passion. But scarcely had she left the house till Leddy Grippy, reflecting on what had passed, was not quite at ease in her mind with respect to the sentimental insinuation of being devoted to another; for although, in the subsequent conversation, the dexterity and address of the young lady considerably weakened the impression which it had at first made, still enough remained to make her suspect it really contained more than was intended to have been conveyed. But, to avoid unnecessary disturbance, she resolved to give her son a hint to observe the motions of his daughter, while, at the same time, she also determined to ascertain how far there was any ground to suppose that, from the attachment of James to Ellen Frazer, there was reason to apprehend that he might likewise be as much averse to the projected marriage as Robina. And with this view she sent for him that evening; but what passed will furnish matter for another chapter.

CHAPTER LXV

THE leddy was seated at her tea-table when young Walkinshaw arrived, and, as on all occasions when she had any intention in her head, she wore an aspect pregnant with importance. She was now an old woman, and had so long survived the sorrows of her widowhood that even the weeds were thrown aside, and she had resumed her former dresses, unchanged from the fashion in which they were originally made. Her appearance, in consequence, was at once aged and ancient.

"Come your ways, Jamie," said she, "and draw in a chair and sit down; but, afore doing sae, tell the lass to bring ben the treck-pot,"—which he accordingly did; and as soon as the treck-pot, *alias* tea-pot, was on the board she opened her trenches.

"Jamie," she began, "your uncle George has a great notion of you, and has done muckle for your mother, giving her, o' his own free-will, a handsome 'nuity, by the which she has brought up you and Mary your sister wi' great credit and comfort. I would therefore fain hope that,

in the way o' gratitude, there will be no slackness on your part."

James assured her that he had a very strong sense of his uncle's kindness, and that, to the best of his ability, he would exert himself to afford him every satisfaction, but that Glasgow was not a place which he much liked, and that he would rather go abroad and push his fortune elsewhere than continue confined to the counting-house.

"There's baith sense and sadness, Jamie, in what ye say," replied the leddy; "but I won'er what ye would do abroad, when there's sic a bien bield biggit for you at home. Ye ken, by course o' nature, that your uncle's ordain't to die, and that he has only his ane dochter, Beenie, your cousin, to inherit the braw conquest o' your worthy grandfather, the whilk, but for some mistak' o' law, and the sudden ouercome o' death amang us, would hae been yours by right o' birth. So that it's in a manner pointed out to you by the forefinger o' Providence to marry Beenie."

James was less surprised at this suggestion than the old lady expected, and said, with a degree of coolness that she was not prepared for —

"I dare say what you speak of would not be disagreeable to my uncle, for several times he has himself intimated as much; but it is an event that can never take place."

"And what for no? I'm sure Beenie's fortune

will be a better bargain than a landless lad like you can hope for at ony other hand."

"True, but I'll never marry for money."

"And what will ye marry for, then?" exclaimed the leddy. "Tak my word o' experience for't, my man: a warm down-seat's o' far mair consequence in matrimony than the silly low o' love. And think what a bonny business your father and mother made o' their gentle-shepherding. But, Jamie, what's the reason ye'll no tak Beenie? There maun surely be some because for sic unnaturality."

"Why," said he, laughing, "I think it's time enough for me yet to be dreaming o' marrying."

"That's no a satisfaction to my question; but there's ae thing I would fain gie you warning o', and that is, if ye'll no marry Beenie, I dinna think ye can hae ony farther to look, in the way o' patronage, frae your uncle."

"Then," said James indignantly, "if his kindness is only given on such a condition as that, I ought not to receive it an hour longer."

"Here's a tap o' tow!" exclaimed the leddy. "Aff and awa wi' you to your mother at Camrachle, and gallant about the braes and dykesides wi' that lang windlestrae-leggit tawpie, Nell Frizel. She's the because o' your rebellion. 'Deed, ye may think shame o't, Jamie; for it's a' enough to bring disgrace on a' manner o' affection to hear what I hae heard about you and her."

"What have you heard?" cried he, burning with wrath and indignation.

"The callan's gaun aff at the head, to look at me as if his een were pistols. How dare ye, sir? But it's no worth my while to lose my temper wi' a creature that doesna ken the homage and honour due to his aged grandmother. Howsever, I'll be as plain as I'm pleasant wi' you, my man; and if there's no an end soon put to your pastoraulity wi' yon Highland heron, and a sedate and dutiful compliancy vouchsafed to your benefactor, uncle George, there will be news in the land or lang."

"You really place the motives of my uncle's conduct towards me in a strange light, and you forget that Robina is perhaps as strongly averse to the connection as I am."

"So she would fain try to gar me trow," replied the leddy; "the whilk is a most mystical thing: but, poor lassie, I needna be surprised at it, when she jealouses that your affections are set on a loup-the-dyke Jenny Cameron like Nell Frizel. Howsever, Jamie, no to make a confabble about the matter, there can be no doubt that if ye'll sing 'We'll gang nae mair to yon town,' wi' your back to the manse o' Camrachle, Beenie, who is a most sweet-tempered and obedient fine lassie, will soon be wrought into a spirit of conformity wi' her father's will and my wishes."

"I cannot but say," replied Walkinshaw, "that you consider affection as very pliant. Nor do I

know why you take such liberties with Miss Frazer, who, in every respect, is infinitely superior to Robina."

"Her superior!" cried the leddy. "But love's blin' as well as fey, or ye would as soon think o' likening a yird taid to a patrick or a turtle-dove as Nell Frizel to Beenie Walkinshaw. Eh, man! Jamie, but ye hae a poor taste; and I may say, as the auld sang sings, 'Will ye compare a docken till a tansie?' I wouldna touch her wi' the tangs."

"But you know," said Walkinshaw, laughing at the excess of her contempt, "that there is no accounting for tastes."

"The craw thinks its ain bird the whitest," replied the leddy, "but, for a' that, it's as black as the back o' the bress;[1] and, therefore, I would advise you to believe me that Nell Frizel is just as ill-far't a creature as e'er came out the Maker's hand. I hae lived threescore and fifteen years in the world, and surely, in the course o' nature, should ken by this time what beauty is and ought to be."

How far the leddy might have proceeded with her argument it is impossible to say; for it was suddenly interrupted by her grandson bursting into an immoderate fit of laughter, which had the effect of instantly checking her eloquence, and turning the course of her ideas and animadversions into another channel. In the course of a few minutes, however, she returned to the charge,

[1] *Back o' the bress.* Back of the chimney-piece.

but with no better success; and Walkinshaw left her, half resolved to come to some explanation on the subject with his uncle. It happened, however, that this discussion which we have just related took place on a Saturday night; and the weather next day being bright and beautiful, instead of going to his uncle's at Kittlestonheugh, as he commonly did on Sunday from the time he had been placed in the counting-house, he rose early and walked to Camrachle, where he arrived to breakfast, and afterwards accompanied his mother and sister to church.

The conversation with the old leddy was still ringing in his ears, and her strictures on the beauty and person of Ellen Frazer seemed so irresistibly ridiculous when he beheld her tall and elegant figure advancing to the minister's pew, that he could with difficulty preserve the decorum requisite to the sanctity of the place. Indeed, the effect was so strong that Ellen herself noticed it; insomuch that, when they met after sermon in the churchyard, she could not refrain from asking what had tickled him. Simple as the question was, and easy as the explanation might have been, he found himself at the moment embarrassed and at a loss to answer her. Perhaps, had they been by themselves, this would not have happened; but Mrs Eadie and his mother and sister were present. In the evening, however, when he accompanied Mary and her to a walk along the brow of the hazel bank which over-

looked the village, he took an opportunity of telling her what had passed, and of expressing his determination to ascertain how far his uncle was seriously bent on wishing him to marry Robina ; protesting, at the same time, that it was a union which could never be—intermingled with a thousand little tender demonstrations, infinitely more delightful to the ears of Ellen than it is possible to make them to our readers. Indeed, Nature plainly shows that the conversations of lovers are not fit for the public, by the care which she takes to tell the gentle parties that they must speak in whispers, and choose retired spots and shady bowers, and other sequestered poetical places, for their conferences.

CHAPTER LXVI

THE conversations between the leddy and her grandchildren were not of a kind to keep with her. On Monday morning she sent for her son, and, without explaining to him what had passed, cunningly began to express her doubts if ever a match would take place between James and Robina, recommending that the design should be given up, and an attempt made to conciliate a union between his daughter and her cousin Dirdumwhamle's son, by which, as she observed, the gear would still be kept in the family.

George, however, had many reasons against the match, not only with respect to the entail, but in consideration of Dirdumwhamle having six sons by his first marriage and four by his second, all of whom stood between his nephew and the succession to his estate. It is, therefore, almost unnecessary to say that he had a stronger repugnance to his mother's suggestion than if she had proposed a stranger rather than their relation.

"But," said he, "what reason have you to doubt that James and Robina are not likely to gratify our hopes and wishes? He is a very

well-behaved lad; and though his heart does not appear to lie much to the business of the counting-house, still he is so desirous, apparently, to give satisfaction that I have no doubt in time he will acquire steadiness and mercantile habits."

"It wouldna be easy to say," replied the leddy, "a' the whys and wherefores that I hae for my suspection. But, ye ken, if the twa haena a right true love and kindness for ane anither, it will be a dure job to make them happy in the way o' matrimonial felicity; and, to be plain wi' you, Geordie, I would be nane surprised if something had kittled between Jamie and a Highland lassie, ane Nell Frizel, that bides wi' the new-light minister o' Camrachle."

The laird had incidentally heard of Ellen, and, once or twice, when he happened to visit his sister-in-law, he had seen her, and was struck with her beauty. But it had never occurred to him that there was any attachment between her and his nephew. The moment, however, that the leddy mentioned her name, he acknowledged to himself its probability.

"But do you really think," said he anxiously, "that there is anything of the sort between her and him?"

"Frae a' that I can hear, learn, and understand," replied the leddy, "though it mayna be probable-like, yet I fear it's ouer true; for when he gangs to see his mother,—and it's aye wi' him as wi' the saints, 'O mother dear Jerusalem, when

shall I come to thee?'—I am most creditably informed that the twa do nothing but sally forth hand in hand to walk in the green valleys, singing, 'Low down in the broom' and 'Pu'ing lilies both fresh and gay,'—which is as sure a symptom o' something very like love as the hen's cackle is o' a new-laid egg."

"Nevertheless," said the laird, "I should have no great apprehensions, especially when he comes to understand how much it is his interest to prefer Robina."

"That's a' true, Geordie; but I hae a misdoot that a's no right and sound wi' her mair than wi' him; and when we refleck how the mim maidens nowadays hae delivered themselves up to the little-gude in the shape and glamour o' novelles and Thomson's *Seasons*, we need be nane surprised to fin' Miss as headstrong in her obduracy as the Lovely Young Lavinia, that your sister Meg learned to 'cite at the boarding-school."

"It is not likely, however," said the laird, "that she has yet fixed her affections on any one; and a very little attention on the part of James would soon overcome any prejudice that she may happen to have formed against him,—for now, when you bring the matter to mind, I do recollect that I have more than once observed a degree of petulance and repugnance on her part."

"Then I mak no doot," exclaimed the old lady, "that she is in a bigoted state to another, and it would be wise to watch her. But, first and

foremost, you should sift Jamie's tender passion—that's the novelle name for calf-love—and if it's within the compass o' a possibility, get the swine driven through't, or it may work us a' muckle dule as his father's moonlight marriage did to your ain, worthy man! That was indeed a sair warning to us a', and is the because to this day o' a' the penance o' vexation and tribulation that me and you, Geordie, are sae obligated to dree."

The admonition was not lost; on the contrary, George, who was a decisive man of business, at once resolved to ascertain whether there were indeed any reasonable grounds for his mother's suspicions. For this purpose, on returning to the counting-house, he requested Walkinshaw to come in the evening to Kittlestonheugh, as he had something particular to say. The look and tone with which the communication was made convinced James that he could not be mistaken with respect to the topic intended, which, he conjectured, was connected with the conversation he had himself held with the leddy on the preceding Saturday evening; and it was the more agreeable to him as he was anxious to be relieved from the doubts which began to trouble him regarding the views and motives of his uncle's partiality. For, after parting from Ellen, he had, in the course of his walk back to Glasgow, worked himself up into a determination to quit the place, if any hope of the suggested marriage with Robina was the tenure by which he held her father's

favour. His mind, in consequence, as he went to Kittlestonheugh in the evening, was occupied with many plans and schemes — the vague and aimless projects which fill the imagination of youth when borne forward either by hopes or apprehensions. Indeed, the event contemplated, though it was still contingent on the spirit with which his uncle might receive his refusal, he yet, with the common precipitancy of youth, anticipated as settled, and his reflections were accordingly framed and modified by that conclusion. To leave Glasgow he was determined; but where to go and what to do were points not so easily arranged, and ever and anon the image of Ellen Frazer rose in all the radiance of her beauty, like the angel to Balaam, and stood between him and his purpose.

The doubts, the fears, and the fondness which alternately predominated in his bosom received a secret and sympathetic energy from the appearance and state of external nature. The weather was cloudy but not lowering; a strong tempest seemed, however, to be raging at a distance; and several times he paused and looked back at the enormous masses of dark and troubled vapour which were drifting along the whole sweep of the northern horizon, from Ben Lomond to the Ochils, as if some awful burning was laying waste the world beyond them; while a long and splendid stream of hazy sunshine, from behind the Cowal mountains, brightened the rugged summits of

Dumbuck, and spreading its golden fires over Dumbarton moor, gilded the brow of Dumgoin, and lighted up the magnificent vista which opens between them of the dark and distant Grampians.

The appearance of the city was also in harmony with the general sublimity of the evening. Her smoky canopy was lowered almost to a covering —a mist from the river hovered along her skirts and scattered buildings; but here and there some lofty edifice stood proudly eminent, and the pinnacles of the steeples, glittering like spear-points through the cloud, suggested to the fancy strange and solemn images of heavenly guardians, stationed to oppose the adversaries of man.

A scene so wild, so calm, and yet so troubled and darkened, would at any time have heightened the enthusiasm of young Walkinshaw; but the state of his feelings made him more than ordinarily susceptible to the eloquence of its various lights and shadows. The uncertainty which wavered in the prospects of his future life found a mystical reflex in the swift and stormy wrack of the carry that some unfelt wind was silently urging along the distant horizon. The still and stationary objects around—the protected city and the everlasting hills—seemed to bear an assurance that, however obscured the complexion of his fortunes might at that moment be, there was still something within himself that ought not to suffer any change, from the evanescent circumstances of another's frown or favour. This con-

fidence in himself, felt perhaps for the first time that evening, gave a degree of vigour and decision to the determination which he had formed; and by the time he had reached the porch of his uncle's mansion his step was firm, his emotions were regulated, and a full and manly self-possession had succeeded to the fluctuating feelings with which he left Glasgow, insomuch that even his countenance seemed to have received some new impress, and to have lost the softness of youth and taken more decidedly the cast and characteristics of manhood.

CHAPTER LXVII

WALKINSHAW found his uncle alone, who, after some slight inquiries relative to unimportant matters of business, said to him—

"I have been desirous to see you, because I am anxious to make some family arrangements, respecting which, though I do not anticipate any objection on your part, as they will be highly advantageous to your interests, it is still proper that we should clearly understand each other. It is unnecessary to inform you that, by the disinheritance of your father, I came to the family estate, which, in the common course of nature, might have been yours; and you are quite aware that, from the time it became necessary to cognosce your uncle, I have uniformly done more for your mother's family than could be claimed or was expected of me."

"I am sensible of all that, sir," replied Walkinshaw, "and I hope there is nothing which you can reasonably expect me to do that I shall not feel pleasure in performing."

His uncle was not quite satisfied with this: the firmness with which it was uttered and the self-

reservation which it implied were not propitious to his wishes; but he resumed—

"In the course of a short time you will naturally be looking to me for some establishment in business, and certainly, if you conduct yourself as you have hitherto done, it is but right that I should do something for you. Much, however, will depend, as to the extent of what I may do, on the disposition with which you fall in with my views. Now, what I wish particularly to say to you is that, having but one child, and my circumstances enabling me to retire from the active management of the house, it is in my power to resign a considerable share in your favour, and this it is my wish to do in the course of two or three years, if——" and he paused, looking his nephew steadily in the face.

"I trust," said Walkinshaw, "it can be coupled with no condition that will prevent me from availing myself of your great liberality."

His uncle was still more damped by this than by the former observation, and he replied peevishly—

"I think, young man, considering your destitute circumstances, you might be a little more grateful for my friendship. It is but a cold return to suppose I would subject you to any condition that you would not gladly agree to."

This, though hastily conceived, was not so sharply expressed as to have occasioned any particular sensation; but the train of Walkin-

shaw's reflections, with his suspicion of the object for which he was that evening invited to the country, made him feel it acutely, and his blood mounted at the allusion to his poverty. Still, without petulance, but in an emphatic manner, he replied—

"I have considered your friendship always as disinterested, and as such I have felt and cherished the sense of gratitude which it naturally inspired; but I frankly confess that, had I any reason to believe it was less so than I hope it is, I doubt I should be unable to feel exactly as I have hitherto felt."

"And, in the name of goodness!" exclaimed his uncle, at once surprised and apprehensive, "what reason have you to suppose that I was not actuated by my regard for you as my nephew?"

"I have never had any, nor have I said so," replied Walkinshaw; "but you seem to suspect that I may not be so agreeable to some purpose you intend as the obligations you have laid me under, perhaps, entitle you to expect."

"The purpose I intend," said the uncle, "is the strongest proof that I can give you of my affection. It is nothing less than founded on a hope that you will so demean yourself as to give me the pleasure, in due time, of calling you by a dearer name than nephew."

Notwithstanding all the preparations which Walkinshaw had made to hear the proposal with firmness, it overcame him like a thunder-clap,

and he sat some time looking quickly from side to side, and unable to answer.

"You do not speak," said his uncle; and he added, softly and inquisitively, "Is there any cause to make you averse to Robina? I trust I may say to you, as a young man of discretion and good sense, that there is no green and foolish affection which ought for a moment to weigh with you against the advantages of a marriage with your cousin: were there nothing else held out to you, the very circumstance of regaining so easily the patrimony which your father had so inconsiderately forfeited should of itself be sufficient. But, besides that, on the day you are married to Robina, it is my fixed intent to resign the greatest part of my concern in the house to you, thereby placing you at once in opulence."

While he was thus earnestly speaking Walkinshaw recovered his self-possession; and, being averse to give a disagreeable answer, he said that he could not but duly estimate, to the fullest extent, all the advantages which the connection would ensure. "But," said he, "have you spoken to Robina herself?"

"No," replied his uncle, with a smile of satisfaction, anticipating from the question something like a disposition to acquiesce in his views. "No; I leave that to you—that's your part. You now know my wishes; and I trust and hope you are sensible that few proposals could be made to you so likely to promote your best interests."

Walkinshaw saw the difficulties of his situation. He could no longer equivocate with them. It was impossible, he felt, to say that he would speak on the subject to Robina without being guilty of duplicity towards his uncle. Besides this, he conceived it would sully the honour and purity of his affection for Ellen Frazer to allow himself to seek any declaration of refusal from Robina, however certain of receiving it. His uncle saw his perplexity, and said—

"This proposal seems to have very much disconcerted you; but I will be plain, for, in a matter on which my heart is so much set, it is prudent to be candid. I do not merely suspect, but have some reason to believe, that you have formed a schoolboy attachment to Mrs Eadie's young friend. Now, without any other remark on the subject, I will only say that, though Miss Frazer is a very fine girl, and of a most respectable family, there is nothing in the circumstances of her situation, compared with those of your cousin, that would make any man of sense hesitate between them."

So thought Walkinshaw; for, in his opinion, the man of sense would at once prefer Ellen.

"However," continued his uncle, "I will not at present press this matter further. I have opened my mind to you, and I make no doubt that you will soon see the wisdom and propriety of acceding to my wishes."

Walkinshaw thought he would be acting un-

worthy of himself if he allowed his uncle to entertain any hope of his compliance; and accordingly he said, with some degree of agitation, but not so much as materially to affect the force with which he expressed himself,—

"I will not deny that your information with respect to Miss Frazer is correct; and the state of our sentiments renders it impossible that I should for a moment suffer you to expect I can ever look on Robina but as my cousin."

"Well, well, James," interrupted his uncle, "I know all that; and I calculated on hearing as much, and even more; but take time to reflect on what I have proposed, and I shall be perfectly content to see the result in your actions. So, let us go to your aunt's room and take tea with her and Robina."

"Impossible!—never!" exclaimed Walkinshaw, rising. "I cannot allow you for a moment longer to continue in so fallacious an expectation. My mind is made up, my decision was formed before I came here, and no earthly consideration will induce me to forego an affection that has grown with my growth and strengthened with my strength."

His uncle laughed, and rubbed his hands, exceedingly amused at this rhapsody, and said, with the most provoking coolness,—

"I shall not increase your flame by stirring the fire. You are still but a youth, and it is very natural that you should have a love fit. All,

therefore, that I mean to say at present is, Take time—consider—reflect on the fortune you may obtain, and contrast it with the penury and dependence to which your father and mother exposed themselves by the rash indulgence of an inconsiderate attachment."

"Sir," exclaimed Walkinshaw fervently, "I was prepared for the proposal you have made, and my determination with respect to it was formed and settled before I came here."

"Indeed!" said his uncle coldly; "and pray what is it?"

"To quit Glasgow; to forego all the pecuniary advantages that I may derive from my connection with you—if"—and he made a full stop and looked his uncle severely in the face—"if," he resumed, "your kindness was dictated with a view to this proposal."

A short silence ensued, in which Walkinshaw still kept his eye brightly and keenly fixed on his uncle's face; but the laird was too much a man of the world not to be able to endure this scrutiny.

"You are a strange fellow," he at last said, with a smile that he intended should be conciliatory; "but as I was prepared for a few heroics, I can forgive you."

"Forgive!" cried the hot and indignant youth. "What have I done to deserve such an insult? I thought your kindness merited my gratitude. I felt towards you as a man should feel towards a great benefactor. But now it would almost seem

that you have in all your kindness but pursued some sinister purpose. Why am I selected to be your instrument? Why are my feelings and affections to be sacrificed on your sordid altars?"

He found his passion betraying him into irrational extravagance, and, torn by the conflict within him, he covered his face with his hands and burst into tears.

"This is absolute folly, James," said his uncle soberly.

"It is not folly," was again his impassioned answer. "My words may be foolish, but my feelings are at this moment wise. I cannot for ten times all your fortune, told a hundred times, endure to think I may be induced to barter my heart. It may be that I am ungrateful; if so, as I can never feel otherwise upon the subject than I do, send me away, as unworthy longer to share your favour; but worthy I shall nevertheless be of something still better."

"Young man, you will be more reasonable to-morrow," said his uncle contemptuously, and immediately left the room. Walkinshaw at the same moment took his hat, and rushing towards the door, quitted the house: but in turning suddenly round the corner, he ran against Robina, who, having some idea of the object of his visit, had been listening at the window to their conversation.

CHAPTER LXVIII

THE agitation in which Walkinshaw was at the moment when he encountered Robina prevented him from being surprised at meeting her, and also from suspecting the cause which had taken her to that particular place so late in the evening. The young lady was more cool and collected, as we believe young ladies always are on such occasions, and she was the first who spoke.

"Where are you running so fast?" said she. "I thought you would have stayed tea. Will you not go back with me? My mother expects you."

"Your father does not," replied Walkinshaw tersely; "and I wish it had been my fortune never to have set my foot within his door."

"Dear me!" exclaimed Miss Robina, as artfully as if she had not known anything, nor overheard every word which had passed. "What has happened? I hope nothing has occurred to occasion any quarrel between you. Do think, James, how prejudicial it must be to your interests to quarrel with my father."

"Curse that eternal word 'interests'!" was the unceremonious answer. "Your father seems to think that human beings have nothing but interests: that the heart keeps a ledger, and values everything in pounds sterling. Our best affections, our dearest feelings, are with him only as tare, that should pass for nothing in the weight of moral obligations."

"But stop," said Robina; "don't be in such a hurry. Tell me what all this means — what have affections and dear feelings to do with your counting-house affairs? I thought you and he never spoke of anything but rum puncheons and sugar cargoes."

"He is incapable of knowing the value of anything less tangible and vendible!" exclaimed her cousin. "But I have done with both him and you."

"Me!" cried Miss Robina, with an accent of the most innocent admiration that any sly and shrewd Miss of eighteen could possibly assume. "Me! What have I to do with your hopes and your affections, and your tangible and vendible commodities?"

"I beg your pardon; I meant no offence to you, Robina — I am overborne by my feelings," said Walkinshaw; "and if you knew what has passed, you would sympathise with me."

"But as I do not," replied the young lady coolly, "you must allow me to say that your behaviour appears to me very extravagant. Surely

nothing has passed between you and my father that I may not know?"

This was said in a manner that instantly recalled Walkinshaw to his senses. The deep and cunning character of his cousin he had often before remarked, with, we may say plainly, aversion; and he detected at once in the hollow and sonorous affectation of sympathy with which her voice was tuned, particularly in the latter clause of the sentence, the insincerity and hypocrisy of her conduct. He did not, however, suspect that she had been playing the eavesdropper, and, therefore, still tempered with moderation his expression of the sentiments she was so ingeniously leading him on to declare.

"No," said he calmly, "nothing has passed between your father and me that you may not know; but it will come more properly from him —for it concerns you, and in a manner that I can never take interest or part in."

"Concerns me! concerns me!" exclaimed the actress. "It is impossible that anything of mine could occasion a misunderstanding between you."

"But it has," said Walkinshaw; "and,—to deal with you, Robina, as you ought to be dealt with, for affecting to be so ignorant of your father's long-evident wishes and intents,—he has actually declared that he is most anxious we should be married."

"I can see no harm in that," said she; adding dryly, "provided it is not to one another."

"But it is to one another," said Walkinshaw unguardedly and in the simplicity of earnestness, —which Miss perceiving, she instantly, with the adroitness of her sex, turned to account, saying with well-feigned diffidence,—

"I do not see why that should be so distressing to you."

"No!" replied he. "But the thing can never be, and it is of no use for us to talk of it; so good-night."

"Stay," cried Robina. "What you have told me deserves consideration. Surely I have given you no reason to suppose that, in a matter so important, I may not find it my interest to comply with my father's wishes."

"Heavens!" exclaimed Walkinshaw, raising his clenched hands in a transport to the skies.

"Why are you so vehement?" said Robina.

"Because," replied he solemnly, "interest seems the everlasting consideration of our family: interest disinherited my father—interest made my uncle Walter consign my mother to poverty—interest proved the poor repentant wretch insane —interest claims the extinction of all I hold most precious in life—and interest would make me baser than the most sordid of all our sordid race."

"Then I am to understand you dislike me so much that you have refused to accede to my father's wishes for our mutual happiness?"

"For our mutual misery I have refused to

accede," was the abrupt reply; "and if you had not some motive for appearing to feel otherwise —which motive I neither can penetrate nor desire to know—you would be as resolute in your objection to the bargain as I am—match I cannot call it, for it proceeds in a total oblivion of all that can endear or ennoble such a permanent connection."

Miss was conscious of the truth of this observation, and with all her innate address it threw her off her guard, and she said—

"Why do you suppose that I am so insensible? My father may intend what he pleases; but my consent must be obtained before he can complete his intentions." She had, however, scarcely said so much when she perceived she was losing the vantage-ground that she had so dexterously occupied, and she turned briskly round and added, "But, James, why should we fall out about this? There is time enough before us to consider the subject dispassionately. My father cannot mean that the marriage should take place immediately."

"Robina, you are your father's daughter, and the heiress of his nature as well as of his estate. No such marriage ever can or shall take place, nor do you wish it should. But I am going too far: it is enough that I declare my affections irrevocably engaged, and that I will never listen to a second proposition on that subject, which has to-night driven me wild. I have quitted

your father—I intend it for ever. I will never return to his office. All that I built on my connection with him is now thrown down. Perhaps with it my happiness also is lost—but no matter, I cannot be a dealer in such bargaining as I have heard to-night. I am thankful to Providence that gave me a heart to feel better, and friends who taught me to think more nobly. However, I waste my breath and spirits idly; my resolution is fixed, and when I say Good-night I mean Farewell."

With these words he hurried away; and after walking a short time on the lawn, Robina returned into the house, and going up to her mother's apartment, where her father was sitting, she appeared as unconcerned and unconscious of the two preceding conversations as if she had been neither a listener to the one nor an actress in the other.

On entering the room she perceived that her father had been mentioning to her mother something of what had passed between himself and her cousin; but it was her interest, on account of the direction which her affections had taken, to appear ignorant of many things, and studiously to avoid any topic with her father that might lead him to suspect her bent: for she had often observed that few individuals could be proposed to him as a match for her that he entertained so strong a prejudice against, although really, in point of appearance, relationship, and behaviour, it

could hardly be said that the object of her preference was much inferior to her romantic cousin. The sources and motives of that prejudice she was, however, regardless of discovering. She considered it, in fact, as an unreasonable and unaccountable antipathy, and was only anxious for the removal of any cause that might impede the consummation she devoutly wished. Glad, therefore, to be so fully mistress of Walkinshaw's sentiments as she had that night made herself, she thought that, by a judicious management of her knowledge, she might overcome her father's prejudice. And the address and dexterity with which she tried this we shall attempt to describe in the following chapter.

CHAPTER LXIX

"I THOUGHT," said she, after seating herself at the tea-table, "that my cousin would have stopped to-night; but I understand he has gone away."

"Perhaps," replied her father, "had you requested him, he might have stayed."

"I don't think he would for me," was her answer. "He does not appear particularly satisfied when I attempt to interfere with any of his proceedings."

"Then you do sometimes attempt to interfere?" said her father, somewhat surprised at the observation, and not suspecting that she had heard one word of what had passed, every syllable of which was carefully stored in the treasury of her bosom.

The young lady perceived that she was proceeding a little too quickly, and drew in her horns.

"All," said she, "that I meant to remark was that he is not very tractable, which I regret;" and she contrived to give a sigh.

"Why should you regret it so particularly?" inquired her father, a little struck at the peculiar accent with which she had expressed herself.

"I cannot tell," was her adroit reply; and then she added, in a brisker tone, "But I wonder what business I have to trouble myself about him?"

For some time her father made no return to this; but, pushing back his chair from the tea-table till he had reached the chimney-corner, he leant his elbow on the mantelpiece, and appeared for several minutes in a state of profound abstraction. In the meantime Mrs Walkinshaw had continued the conversation with her daughter, observing to her that she did, indeed, think her cousin must be a very headstrong lad; for he had spoken that night to her father in such a manner as had not only astonished but distressed him. "However," said she, "he is still a mere boy; and, I doubt not, will, before long is past, think better of what his uncle has been telling him."

"I am extremely sorry," replied Robina, with the very voice of the most artless sympathy, though perhaps a little more accentuated than simplicity would have employed, "I am very sorry indeed that any difference has arisen between him and my father. I am sure I have always heard him spoken of as an amiable and very deserving young man. I trust it is of no particular consequence."

"It is of the utmost consequence," interposed her father; "and it is of more to you than to any other besides."

"To me, sir! How is that possible? What have I to do with him, or he with me? I am

sure, except in being more deficient in his civilities than most of my acquaintance, I have had no occasion to remark anything particular in his behaviour or conduct towards me."

"I know it—I know it!" exclaimed her father; "and therein lies the source of all my anxiety."

"I fear that I do not rightly understand you," said the cunning girl.

"Nor do I almost wish that you ever should; but, nevertheless, my heart is so intent on the business that I think, were you to second my endeavours, the scheme might be accomplished."

"The scheme? What scheme?" replied the most unaffected Robina.

"In a word, child," said her father, "how would you like James as a husband?"

"How can I tell?" was her simple answer. "He has never given me any reason to think on the subject."

"You cannot, however, but long have seen that it was with me a favourite object?"

"I confess it; and, perhaps, I have myself," she said, with a second sigh, "thought more of it than I ought to have done. But I have never had any encouragement from him."

"How unhappy am I!" thought her father to himself. "The poor thing is as much disposed to the match as my heart could hope for. Surely, surely, by a little address and perseverance, the romantic boy may be brought to reason and to reflect;" and he then said to her—"My dear

Robina, you have been the subject of my conversation with James this evening; but I am grieved to say that his sentiments at present are favourable neither to your wishes nor to mine. He seems enchanted by Mrs Eadie's relation, and talked so much nonsense on the subject that we almost quarrelled."

"I shall never accept of a divided heart," said the young lady despondingly; "and I entreat, my dear father, that you will never take another step in the business; for, as long as I can recollect, he has viewed me with eyes of aversion—and in all that time he has been the playmate, and the lover, perhaps, of Ellen Frazer. Again I implore you to abandon every idea of promoting a union between him and me: it can never take place on his part but from the most sordid considerations of interest; nor on mine without my feeling that I have been but as a bale bargained for."

Her father listened with attention to what she said. It appeared reasonable—it was spirited; but there was something in it, nevertheless, which did not quite satisfy his mind, though the sense was clear and complete.

"Of course," he replied guardedly, "I should never require you to bestow your hand where you had not already given your affections; but it does not follow that, because the headstrong boy is at this time taken up with Miss Frazer, he is always to remain of the same mind. On the contrary, Robina, were you to exert a little address, I am

sure you would soon draw him from that unfortunate attachment."

"What woman," said she, with an air of supreme dignity, "would submit to pilfer the betrothed affections of any man? No, sir, I cannot do that —nor ought I; and—pardon me when I use the expression—nor will I. Had my cousin made himself more agreeable to me, I do not say that such would have been my sentiments; but having seen nothing in his behaviour that can lead me to hope from him anything but the same constancy in his dislike which I have ever experienced, I should think myself base indeed were I to allow you to expect that I may alter my opinion."

Nothing further passed at that time; for, to leave the impression which she intended to produce as strong as possible, she immediately rose and left the room. Her father soon after also quitted his seat, and after taking two or three turns across the floor, went to his own apartment.

"I am the most unfortunate of men," said he to himself, "and my poor Robina is no less frustrated in her affections. I cannot, however, believe that the boy is so entirely destitute of prudence as not to think of what I have told him. I must give him time. Old heads do not grow on young shoulders. But it never occurred to me that Robina was attached to him; on the contrary, I have always thought that the distaste was stronger on her part than on his. But it is of no use to vex myself on the subject. Let me rest satisfied

to-night with having ascertained that at least on Robina's part there is no objection to the match. My endeavours hereafter must be directed to detach James from the girl Frazer. It will, however, be no easy task, for he is ardent and enthusiastic, and she has undoubtedly many of those graces which readiest find favour in a young man's eye."

He then hastily rose and hurriedly paced the room.

"Why am I cursed," he exclaimed, "with this joyless and barren fate? Were Robina a son, all my anxieties would be hushed; but with her my interest in the estate of my ancestors terminates. Her mother, however, may yet——" and he paused. "It is very weak," he added in a moment after, "to indulge in these reflections. I have a plain task before me, and instead of speculating on hopes and chances, I ought to set earnestly about it, and leave no stone unturned till I have performed it thoroughly."

With this he composed his mind for the remainder of the evening, and when he again joined Robina and her mother, the conversation by all parties was studiously directed to indifferent topics.

CHAPTER LXX

THERE are few things more ludicrous, and at the same time more interesting, than the state of a young man in love, unless, perhaps, it be that of an old man in the same unfortunate situation. The warmth of the admiration, the blindness of the passion, and the fond sincerity of the enthusiasm, which give grace and sentiment to the instinct, all awaken sympathy, and even inspire a degree of compassionate regard; but the extravagance of feeling beyond what any neutral person can sympathise with, the ostrich-like simplicity of the expedients resorted to in assignations, and that self-approved sagacity and prudence in concealing what everybody with half an eye can see, afford the most harmless and diverting spectacles of human absurdity. However, as we are desirous of conciliating the reverence of the young and fair, perhaps it may be as well to say nothing more on this head, but allow them to enjoy, in undisturbed faith, the amiable anticipation of that state of beatitude which Heaven and all married personages know is but a very very transient enchantment.

But we cannot, with any regard to the fidelity of circumstantial history, omit to relate what passed in young Walkinshaw's bosom after he parted from his cousin. To render it in some degree picturesque, we might describe his appearance; but when we spoke of him as a handsome, manly youth for his inches and his eild,[1] we said perhaps as much as we could well say upon that head, unless we were to paint the colour and fashion of his clothes—a task for which we have no particular relish;—and therefore we may just briefly mention that they were in the style of the sprucest clerks of Glasgow,—and everybody knows that if the bucks of the Trongate would only button their coats, they might pass for gentlemen of as good blood and breeding as the best in Bond Street. But, even though Walkinshaw had been in the practice of buttoning his, he was that night in no condition to think of it. His whole bosom was as a flaming furnace—raging as fiercely as those of the Muirkirk iron-works that served to illuminate his path.

He felt as if he had been held in a state of degradation, and had been regarded as so destitute of all the honourable qualities of a young man that he would not scruple to barter himself in the most sordid manner. His spirit, then mounting on the exulting wings of youthful hope, bore him aloft into the cloudy and meteoric region of

[1] *His eild.* His time o' life.

romance, and visions of fortune and glory, almost too splendid for the aching sight of his fancy, presented themselves in a thousand smiling forms, beckoning him away from the smoky confines and fœtid airs of Glasgow, and pointing to some of the brightest and beaming bubbles that allure fantastic youth.

But, in the midst of these glittering visions of triumphant adventure, "a change came o'er the spirit of his dream," and he beheld Ellen Frazer in the simple and tasteful attire in which she appeared so beautiful at Camrachle church. In the background of the sunny scene was a pretty poetical cottage, with a lamb tethered by the foot on the green, surrounded by a flock of snowy geese enjoying their noontide siesta, and on the ground troops of cocks and hens, with several gabbling bandy-legged ducks; at the sight of which another change soon came o'er the spirit of his dream, and the elegant mansion that his uncle had made of the old house of Grippy, with all its lawns and plantations, and stately gate and porter's lodge, together with an elegant carriage in the avenue, presented a most alluring picture. But it, too, soon vanished; and in the next change he beheld Robina converted into his wife, carping at all his little pranks and humours, and studious only of her own enjoyments, without having any consideration for those that might be his. Then all was instantly darkened; and after a terrible burst of whirlwinds, and thunder and

lightning, the cloud again opened, and he saw in its phantasmagorial mirror a calm and summer sunset, with his beautiful Ellen Frazer, in the shape of a venerable matron, partaking of the temperate pleasures of an aged man, seated on a rustic seat under a tree, on the brow of Camrachle bank, enjoying the beauties of the view, and talking of their children's children; and in the visage of that aged man he discovered a most respectable resemblance of himself. So fine a close of a life untroubled by any mischance, malady, or injustice could not fail to produce the most satisfactory result. Accordingly, he decidedly resolved that it should be his, and that, as he had previously determined, the connection with his uncle should thenceforth be cut for ever.

By the time that imagination rather than reason had worked him into this decision he arrived at Glasgow; and being resolved to carry his intention into immediate effect, instead of going to the house where he was boarded at his uncle's expense, he went to the leddy's, partly with the intention of remaining there, but chiefly to remonstrate with her for having spoken of his attachment to Ellen Frazer,—having concluded, naturally enough, that it was from her his uncle had received the information.

On entering the parlour he found the old lady seated alone, in her elbow-chair, at the fireside. A single slender candle stood at her elbow on a

small claw-foot table; and she was winding the yarn from a pirn with a hand-reel, carefully counting the turns. Hearing the door open, she looked round, and seeing who it was, said—

"Is that thee, Jamie Walkinshaw?—six-and-thirty. Where came ye frae—seven-and-thirty—at this time o' night?—eight-and-thirty—sit ye down—nine-and-thirty—snuff the candle—forty."

"I'll wait till ye're done," said he, "as I wish to tell you something; for I have been out at Kittlestonheugh, where I had some words with my uncle."

"No possible!—nine-and-forty," replied the leddy. "What hast been about?—fifty——"

"He seems to regard me as if I had neither a will nor feelings, neither a head nor a heart."

"I hope ye hae baith—five-and-fifty—but hae ye been condumacious?—seven-and—plague tak the laddie! I'm out in my count, and I'll hae to begin the cut again; so I may set by the reel. What were you saying, Jamie, anent an outcast wi' your uncle?"

"He has used me exceedingly ill, ripping up the obligations he has laid me under, and taunting me with my poverty."

"And is't no true that ye're obligated to him, and that, but for the uncly duty he has fulfilled towards you, ye would this night hae been a bare lad? Gude kens an' ye wouldna hae been as scant o' cleeding as a salmon in the river."

"It may be so; but when it is considered that

he got the family estate by a quirk of law, he could scarcely have done less than he did for my unfortunate father's family. But I could have forgiven all that, had he not, in a way insulting to my feelings, intimated that he expected I would break with Ellen Frazer and offer myself to Robina."

"And sure am I, Jamie," replied the leddy, "that it will be lang before ye can do better."

"My mind, however, is made up," said he; "and to-morrow morning I shall go to Camrachle and tell my mother that I have resolved to leave Glasgow. I will never again set my foot in the counting-house."

"Got ye ony drink, Jamie, in the gait hame, that ye're in sic a wud humour for dancing 'Auld Sir Simon the King' on the road to Camrachle? Man, an' I had as brisk a bee in the bonnet, I would set aff at ance, cracking my fingers at the moon and seven stars as I gaed louping alang. But, to speak the words of soberness, I'm glad ye hae discretion enough to tak a night's rest first."

"Do not think so lightly of my determination; it is fixed — and from the moment I quitted Kittlestonheugh I resolved to be no longer under any obligation to my uncle. He considers me as a mere passive instrument for his own ends."

"Hech, sirs! man, but ye hae a great share o' sagacity!" exclaimed the leddy; "and because your uncle is fain that ye should marry his only

dochter, and would, if ye did sae, leave you for dowery and tocher a braw estate and a bank o' siller, ye think he has pookit you by the nose."

"No—not for that; but because he thinks so meanly of me as to expect that, for mercenary considerations, I would bargain away both my feelings and my principles."

"Sure am I he would ne'er mint ony sic matter," replied the leddy; "and if he wantit you to break wi' yon galloping nymph o' the Highland heather, and draw up wi' that sweet primrose-creature, your cousin Beenie, wha is a lassie o' sense and composity, and might be a match to majesty, it was a' for your honour and exaltation."

"Don't distress me any further with the subject," said he. "Will you have the goodness to let me stay here to-night?—for, as I told you, there shall never now be any addition made to the obligations which have sunk me so low."

"'Deed, my lad, an' ye gang on in that deleerit manner, I'll no only gie you a bed, but send for baith a doctor and a gradawa, that your head may be shaved, and a' proper remedies—outwardly and inwardly—gotten to bring you back to a right way o' thinking. But, to end a' debates, ye'll just pack up your ends and your awls, and gang hame to Mrs Spruil's, for the tow's to spin and the woo's to card that 'ill be the sheets and blankets o' your bed in this house the night—tak my word for't."

"In that case, I will at once go to Camrachle. The night is fine and the moon's up."

"Awa wi' you, and show how weel ye hae come to years o' discretion by singing, as ye gang,—

'Scotsman ho! Scotsman lo!
Where shall this poor Scotsman go?
Send him east, send him west,
Send him to the craw's nest.'"

Notwithstanding the stern mood that Walkinshaw was in, this latter sally of his grandmother's eccentric humour compelled him to laugh, and he said gaily, "But I shall be none the worse of a little supper before I set out. I hope you will not refuse me that?"

The old lady, supposing that she had effectually brought him (as she said) round to himself, cheerfully acquiesced; but she was not a little disappointed when, after some light and ludicrous conversation on general topics, he still so persisted either to remain in the house or to proceed to his mother's that she found herself obliged to order a bed to be prepared for him. At the same time she continued to express her confidence that he would be in a more docile humour next morning. "I hope," said she, "nevertheless, that the spirit of obedience will soople that stiff neck o' thine in the slumbers and watches of the night, or I ne'er would be consenting to countenance such outstrapulous rebellion."

CHAPTER LXXI

WALKINSHAW passed a night of "restless ecstasy." Sometimes he reflected on the proposition with all the coolness that the laird himself could have desired; but still and anon the centripetal movement of the thoughts and feelings which generated this prudence was suddenly arrested before they had gravitated into anything like resolution, and then he was thrown as wild and as wide from the object of his uncle's solicitude as ever.

In the calmer, perhaps it may therefore be said in the wiser, course of his reflections, Robina appeared to him a shrewd and sensible girl, with a competent share of personal beauty, and many other excellent household qualities to make her a commendable wife. With her he would at once enter on the enjoyment of opulence, and with it independence; and moreover, and above all, have it in his power to restore his mother and sister to that state in society to which, by birth and original expectations, they considered themselves as having some claim. This was a pleasing and a proud thought; and not to indulge it, at

the expense of a little sacrifice of personal feeling, seemed to him selfish and unmanly. But then he would remember with what high-toned bravery of determination he had boasted to his uncle of his pure and unalterable affections; how contemptuously he had spoken of pecuniary inducements, and in what terms, too, he had told Robina herself that she had nothing to hope from him. It was, therefore, impossible that he could present himself to either with any expression of regret for what had passed without appearing, in the eyes of both, as equally weak and unworthy. But the very thought of finding that he could think of entertaining the proposition at all was more acute and mortifying than even this; and he despised himself when he considered how Ellen Frazer would look upon him if she knew he had been so base as for a moment to calculate the sordid advantages of preferring his cousin.

But what was to be done? To return to the counting-house after his resolute declaration—to embark again in that indoor and tame drudgery which he ever hated, which was rendered as vile as slavery by the disclosures which had taken place, could not be. He would be baser than were he to sell himself to his uncle's purposes, could he yield to such a suggestion.

To leave Glasgow was his only alternative; but How? and Where to go? and Where to obtain the means? were stinging questions that he could not answer. And then, What was he to

gain? To marry Robina was to sacrifice Ellen Frazer; to quit the country entailed the same consequence. Besides all that, in so doing he would add to the sorrows and the disappointments of his gentle-hearted and affectionate mother, who had built renewed hopes on his success under the auspices of his uncle, and looked eagerly forward to the time when he should be so established in business as to bring his sister before the world in circumstances befitting his father's child,—for the hereditary pride of family was mingled with his sensibility, and even the beautiful and sprightly Ellen Frazer herself, perhaps, owed something of her superiority over Robina to the Highland pedigrees and heroic traditions which Mrs Eadie delighted to relate of her ancestors.

While tossing on these troubled and conflicting tides of the mind, he happened to recollect that a merchant, a schoolfellow of his father, who, when he occasionally met him, always inquired, with more than common interest, for his mother and sister, had at that time a vessel bound for New York, where he intended to establish a store, and was in want of a clerk; and it occurred to him that, perhaps, through that means he might accomplish his wishes. This notion was as oil to his agitation, and hope restored soon brought sleep and soothing dreams to his pillow. But his slumbers were not of long duration, for before sunrise he awoke; and, in order to avoid the

garrulous remonstrances of the leddy, he rose and went to Camrachle for the purpose (as he persuaded himself) to consult his mother; but, for all that we have been able to understand, it was in reality only to communicate his determination. But these sort of self-delusions are very common to youths under age.

The morning air, as he issued from Glasgow, was cold and raw. Heavy blobs of water, the uncongenial distillations of the midnight fogs, hung so dully on the hoary hedges that even Poesy would be guilty of downright extravagance were she, on any occasion, to call such gross uncrystalline knobs of physic glass by any epithet implying dew. The road was not miry, but gluey, and reluctant, and wearisome to the tread. The smoke from the farm-houses rolled listlessly down the thatch, and lazily spread itself into a dingy azure haze that lingered and lowered among the stacks of the farm-yards. The cows, instead of proceeding with their ordinary sedate commonsense to the pastures, stood on the loans, looking east and west, and lowing to one another—no doubt concerning the state of the weather. The birds chirped peevishly, as they hopped from bough to bough. The ducks walked in silence to their accustomed pools. The hens, creatures at all times of a sober temperament, condoled in actual sadness together under sheds and bushes; and chanticleer himself wore a paler crest than usual, and was so low in spirits that he only once

had heart enough to wind his bugle-horn. Nature was sullen; and the herd-boy drew his blanket-mantle closer round him, and snarlingly struck the calf as he grudgingly drove the herd afield. On the ground, at the door of the toll-bar house, lay a gill-stoup on its side, and near it, on a plate, an empty glass and a bit of bread,—which showed that some earlier traveller had, in despite of the statute, but in consideration of the damp and unwholesome morning, obtained a dram from the gudewife's ain bottle.

In consequence of these sympathetic circumstances, before Walkinshaw reached Camrachle, his heart was almost as heavy as his limbs were tired. His mother, when she saw him pass the parlour window as he approached the door, was surprised at his appearance, and suffered something like a shock of fear when she perceived the dulness of his eye and the dejection of his features.

"What has brought you here?" was her first exclamation; "and what has happened?"

But, instead of replying, he walked in, and seated himself at the fireside, complaining of his cold and uncomfortable walk and the heaviness of the road. His sister was preparing breakfast, and happening not to be in the room, his mother repeated her anxious inquiries with an accent of more earnest solicitude.

"I fear," said Walkinshaw, "that I am only come to distress you;" and he then briefly re-

capitulated what had passed between himself and his uncle respecting Robina. But a sentiment of tenderness for his mother's anxieties, blended with a wish to save her from the disagreeable sensation with which he knew his determination to quit Glasgow would affect her, made him suppress the communication that he had come expressly to make.

Mrs Walkinshaw had been too long accustomed to the occasional anticipations in which her brother-in-law had indulged on the subject to be surprised at what had taken place on his part; and both from her own observations and from the repugnance her son expressed, she had no doubt that his attachment to Ellen Frazer was the chief obstacle to the marriage. The considerations and reflections to which this conclusion naturally gave rise held her for some time silent. The moment, however, that Walkinshaw, encouraged by the seeming slightness of her regret at his declamations against the match, proceeded to a fuller disclosure of his sentiments, and to intimate his resolution to go abroad, her maternal fears were startled, and she was plunged into the profoundest sorrow. But still during breakfast she said nothing; misfortune and disappointment, indeed, had so long subdued her gentle spirit into the most patient resignation that, while her soul quivered in all its tenderest feelings, she seldom even sighed, but, with a pale cheek and a meek supplication, expressed only by a heaven-

ward look of her mild and melancholy eyes, she seemed to say, "Alas! am I still doomed to suffer?" That look was ever irresistible with her children: in their very childhood it brought them, with all their artless and innocent caresses, to her bosom; and, on this occasion, it so penetrated the very core of Walkinshaw's heart that he took her by the hand and burst into tears.

CHAPTER LXXII

WE are no casuists, and therefore cannot undertake to determine whether Jenny did right or wrong in marrying Auld Robin Gray for the sake of her poor father and mother; especially as it has been ever held by the most approved moralists that there are principles to be abided by, even at the expense of great and incontrovertible duties. But of this we are quite certain: there are few trials to which the generous heart can be subjected more severe than a contest between its duties and its affections—between the claims which others have upon the conduct of the man for their advantage and the desires that he has himself to seek his own gratification. In this predicament stood young Walkinshaw; and at the moment when he took his mother by the hand, the claims of filial duty were undoubtedly preferred to the wishes of love.

"I am," said he, "at your disposal, mother; do with me as you think fit. When I resented the mean opinion that my uncle seemed to hold of me, I forgot you—I thought only of myself. My first duties, I now feel, are due to the world,

and the highest of them to my family. But I wish that I had never known Ellen Frazer."

"In that wish, my dear boy, you teach me what I ought myself to do. No, James, I can never desire or expect that my children will sacrifice themselves for me; for I regard it as no less than immolation when the heart revolts at the tasks which the hand performs. But my life has long been one continued sorrow; and it is natural that I should shrink at the approach of another and a darker cloud. I will not, however, ask you to remain with your uncle, nor even oppose your resolution to go abroad. But be not precipitate. Consider the grief, the anxieties, and the humiliations that both your father and I have endured, and think, were you united to Ellen Frazer, supposing her father and friends would consent to so unequal a match, What would be her fate were you cut early off, as your father was? It is the thought of that -of what I myself, with you and for you, have borne—which weighs so grievously at this moment on my spirits."

"Do you wish me to return to Glasgow?" said Walkinshaw, with an anxious and agitated voice.

"Not unless you feel yourself that you can do so without humiliation; for bitter, James, as my cup has been, and ill able as I am to wrestle with the blast, I will never counsel child of mine to do that which may lessen him in his own opinion. Heaven knows that there are mortifications ready enough in the world to humble us—we do not

need to make any for ourselves. No, unless you can meet your uncle with a frank face and a free heart, do not return."

"I am sure, then, that I never can," replied Walkinshaw. "I feel as if he had insulted my nature, by venturing to express what he seems to think of me; and a man can forgive almost any injury but a mean opinion of him."

"But if you do not go to him, perhaps you will not find it difficult to obtain a situation in another counting-house?"

"If I am not to return to his, I would rather at once leave the place. I never liked it, and I shall now like it less than ever. In a word, my intention is to go, if possible, to America."

"Go where you will, my blessing and tears are all, my dear boy, that I can give you."

"Then you approve of my wish to go to America?"

"I do not object to it, James—it is a difficult thing for a mother to say that she approves of her son exposing himself to any hazard."

"What would you have said could I have obtained a commission in the army and a war raging?"

"Just what I say now; nor should I have felt more sorrow in seeing you go to a campaign than I shall feel when you leave me to encounter the yet to you untried perils of the world. Indeed, I may say I should almost feel less; for in the army, with all its hazard, there is a certain degree

of assurance that a young man, if he lives, will be fashioned into an honourable character."

"I wish that there was a war," said Walkinshaw, with such sincere simplicity that even his mother could scarcely refrain from smiling.

The conversation was, at this juncture, interrupted by the entrance of Mrs Eadie, who immediately perceived that something particular had occurred to disturb the tranquillity of her friend; and, for a moment, she looked at Walkinshaw with an austere and majestic eye. His mother observed the severity of her aspect, and thought it as well at once to mention what had happened.

Mrs Eadie listened to the recital of his uncle's proposal, and his resolution to go abroad, with a degree of juridical serenity that lent almost as much solemnity to her appearance as it derived dignity from her august form; and when Mrs Walkinshaw concluded she said—

"We have foreseen all this; and I am only surprised that now, when it has come to pass, it should affect you so much. I dreamed last night, Mrs Walkinshaw, that you were dead, and laid out in your winding-sheet. I thought I was sitting beside the corpse, and that, though I was sorrowful, I was, nevertheless, strangely pleased. In that moment my cousin, Glengael, came into the room, and he had a large ancient book, with brazen clasps on it, under his arm. That book he gave to Ellen Frazer, who, I then saw, was

also in the room, and she undid the brazen clasps, and opening it, showed her father a particular passage, which he read aloud; and, when he paused, I saw you rise, and throwing aside the winding-sheet, you appeared richly dressed, with a cheerful countenance, and on your hands were wedding-gloves. It was to tell you this auspicious dream that I came here this morning, and I have no doubt it betokens some happy change in your fortunes, to come by the agency of Glengael. Therefore, give yourself no uneasiness about this difference between James and his uncle, for, you may rest assured, it will terminate in some great good to your family. But there will be a death first,—that's certain."

Although Walkinshaw was familiar with the occasional gleams of the sibylline pretensions of Mrs Eadie, and always treated them with reverence, he could not resist from smiling at the earnestness with which she delivered her prediction, saying, "But I do not see in what way the dream has anything to do with my case."

"You do not see," replied the lady sternly, "nor do I see; but it does not therefore follow that there is no sympathy between them. The wheels of the world work in darkness, James, and it requires the sight of the seer to discern what is coming round, though the auguries of their index are visible to all eyes. But"—and she turned to Mrs Walkinshaw—"it strikes me

that, in the present state of your circumstances, I might write to my cousin. The possession of Glengael gives him weight with Government, and perhaps his influence might be of use to your son."

This afforded a ray of hope to Walkinshaw, of which he had never entertained the slightest notion, and it also, in some degree, lightened the spirits of his mother. They both expressed their sense of her kindness, and James said gaily that he had no doubt the omens of her dream would soon be verified; but she replied solemnly—

"No! though Glengael may be able, by his interest, to serve you, the agency of death can alone fulfil the vision; but, for the present, let us say no more on that head. I will write to-day to Mr Frazer, and inquire in what way he can best assist all our wishes."

In the meantime the leddy had been informed by her maid of Walkinshaw's early departure for Camrachle; and in consequence, as soon as she had breakfasted, a messenger was despatched to the counting-house, to request that the laird might be sent to her when he came to town. But this was unnecessary, for he had scarcely passed a more tranquil night than his nephew, and before her messenger came back he was in the parlour with Robina, whom he had brought with him in the carriage to spend the day with one of her friends. Why the young lady should

have chosen so unpleasant a day for her visit, particularly as it was a volunteer, and had been, as she said, only concerted with herself after the conversation of the preceding evening, we must allow the sagacity of the reader to discover; but she appeared flurried and put out of countenance when her grandmother told her that she expected Dirdumwhamle and Mrs Milrookit to dinner. "And I think," said she, "Beenie, that ye ought to bide wi' me to meet them, for I expect Walky"—so she styled Walkinshaw their son; "and if ye're no to get the ae cousin, I dinna see but ye might set your cap for the other."

"I trust and hope," exclaimed the laird, "that she has more sense. Walkinshaw Milrookit has nothing."

"And what has Jamie Walkinshaw?" said the leddy. "'Deed, Geordie, though I canna but say ye're baith pawkie and auld-farrant, it's no to be controverted that ye hae gotten your father's bee in the bonnet anent ancestors and forebears, and nae gude can come out o' ony sic havers. Beenie, my leddy, ne'er fash your head wi' your father's dodrums; but, an' ye can hook Walky's heart wi' the tail o' your e'e, ye's no want my helping hand at the fishing."

"Mother," said George vehemently, "I am astonished that you can talk so lightly to the girl. I have my own reasons for being most decidedly averse to any such union. And though I do feel that James has used me ill, and that his

headstrong conduct deserves my severest displeasure, I not only think it a duty to bring about a marriage between Robina and him, but will endeavour to act in it as such. Perhaps, had she been entirely free, I might have felt less interest in the business; but knowing, as I now do, that his coldness alone has prevented her from cherishing towards him a just and proper affection, I should be wanting in my obligations as a father were I not to labour, by all expedient means, to promote the happiness of my child."

During this speech the young lady appeared both out of countenance and inwardly amused; while her grandmother, placing her hands to her sides, looked at her with a queer and inquisitive eye, and said—

"It's no possible, Beenie Walkinshaw, that thou's sic a masquerading cutty as to hae beguil't baith thy father and me? But, if ever I had an e'e in my head, and could see wi' that e'e, it's as true as the deil's in Dublin city that I hae had a discernment o' thy heart-hatred to Jamie Walkinshaw. But let your father rin to the woody as he will: they're no to be born that 'ill live to see that I hae a judgment and an understanding o' what's what. Howsever, Geordie, what's to be done wi' that ne'er-do-weel water-wagtail that's flown awa to its mother? Poor woman, she canna afford to gie't drammock.[1] Something maun be done, and wi' your wish for a fresh clecking of

[1] *Drammock.* Meat.

the pedigrees o' the Walkinshaws o' Kittleston-heugh, that I hae been sae lang deaved and driven doited wi'; 'for the space of forty years,' I may say, in the words of the Psalmist, 'the race hae grieved me.' Ye canna do better than just tak a hurl in your chaise to Camrachle, and bring him in by the lug and horn, and nail him to the desk wi' a pin to his nose."

There was worse advice, the laird thought, than this; and after some further remarks to the same effect, he really did set off for Camrachle with the express intention of doing everything in his power to heal the breach, and to conciliate again the affection and gratitude of his nephew.

CHAPTER LXXIII

As soon as the carriage had left the door, the leddy resumed the conversation with her granddaughter.

"Noo, Beenie Walkinshaw," said she, "I maun put you to the straights o' a question. Ye'll no tell me, lassie, that ye haena flung stoor in your father's een, after the converse that we had thegither by oursel's the other day; therefore and accordingly, I requeesht to know, What's at the bottom o' this black art and glamour that ye hae been guilty o'?—Whatna scamp or hempy[1] is't that the cutty has been gallanting wi', that she's trying to cast the glaiks[2] in a' our een for?—Wha is't?—I insist to know; for ye'll ne'er gar me believe that there's no a because for your jookery-pawkery."

"You said," replied Miss, half blushing, half laughing, "that you would lend a helping hand to me with Walkinshaw Milrookit."

"Eh! megsty me! I'm sparrow-blasted!" exclaimed the leddy, throwing herself back in the chair and lifting both her hands and eyes in

[1] *Hempy.* Rogue (for whom the hemp is in store).

[2] *To cast the glaiks.* To deceive.

wonderment. "But thou, Beenie Walkinshaw, is a soople fairy; and so a' the time that thy father—as blin' as the silly blind bodie that his wife gart believe her gallant's horse was a milch cow sent frae her minny—was wising and wyling to bring about a matrimony, or, as I should ca't, a matter-o'-money conjugality wi' your cousin Jamie, hae ye be linking by the dyke-sides, out o' sight, wi' Walky Milrookit? Weel, that beats print! Whatna novelle gied you that lesson, lassie? Hech, sirs! auld as I am, but I would like to read it. Howsever, Beenie, as the ae oe's as sib to me as the ither, I'll be as gude as my word; and when Dirdumwhamle and your aunty, wi' your joe, are here the day, we'll just lay our heads thegither for a purpose o' marriage, and let your father play the Scotch measure, or shantruse, wi' the bellows and the shank o' the besom, to some warlock wallop o' his auld papistical and paternostering ancestors, that hae been —Gude preserve us!—for aught I ken to the contrary, suppin' brimstone broth wi' the deil lang afore the time o' Adam and Eve. Methuselah himself, I verily believe, could be naething less than half a cousin to the nine hundred and ninety-ninth Walkinshaw o' Kittlestonheugh. Howsever, Beenie, thou's a—thou's a—I'll no say what—ye little dooble cutty, to keep me in the dark, when I could hae gi'en you and Walky sae muckle convenience for courting. But, for a' that, I'll no be devoid o' grace, but act the part

of a kind and affectionate grandmother, as it is well known I hae aye been to a' my bairns' childer; only I never thought to hae had a finger in the pie o' a Clarissy Harlot wedding."

"But," said Robina, "what if my father should succeed in persuading James still to fall in with his wishes? My situation would be dreadful."

"'Deed, an' that come to a possibility, I kenna what's to be done," replied the leddy; "for ye know it will behove me to tak my ain son your father's part; and, as I was saying, Jamie Walkinshaw being as dear to me as Walky Milrookit, I can do no less than help you to him, which need be a matter of no diffeequalty, 'cause ye hae gart your father trow that ye're out o' the body for Jamie. So, as I said before, ye maun just conform."

Miss looked aghast for a moment, and exclaimed, clasping her hands, at finding the total contempt with which her grandmother seemed to consider her affections,—

"Heaven protect me! I am ruined and undone!"

"Na, if that's the gait o't, Beenie, I hae nothing to say but to help to tak up the luppensteek[1] in your stocking wi' as much brevity as is consistent wi' perspicuity, as the minister o' Port-Glasgow says."

"What do you mean? To what do you allude?" cried the young lady, terrified.

[1] *Luppen-steek.* Dropped stitch.

"Beenie Walkinshaw, I'll be calm; I'll no lose my composity. But it's no to seek what I could say, ye Jerusalem concubine, to bring sic a crying sin into my family. O woman, woman! but ye're a silly nymph, and the black stool o' repentance is ouer gude for you!"

Robina was so shocked and thunderstruck at the old lady's imputations and kindling animadversions that she actually gasped with horror.

"But," continued her grandmother, "since it canna be helped noo, I maun just tell your father, as well as I can, and get the minister when we're a' thegither in the afternoon, and declare an irregular marriage, which is a calamity that never happened on my side of the house."

Unable any longer to control her agitation, Robina started from her seat exclaiming, "Hear me, in mercy! spare such horrible——"

"Spare!" interrupted the leddy, with the sharpest tone of her indignation. "An' ye were my dochter as ye're but my grand-dochter, I would spare you, ye Israelitish handmaid and randy o' Babylon! But pride ne'er leaves its master without a fa'—your father's weel serv't: he would tak nane o' my advice in your education, but, instead o' sending you to a Christian school, got down frae Manchester, in England, a governess for Miss, my leddy, wi' gumflowers on her head and paint on her cheeks, and speaking in sic high English that the Babel babble o' Mull and Moydart was a perfection o' sense when compar't wi't."

"Good heavens! how have you fallen into this strange mistake?" said Robina, so much recovered that she could scarcely refrain from laughing.

"Beenie, Beenie! ye may ca't a mistake; but I say it's a shame and a sin. Oh, sic a blot to come on the 'scutcheon of my old age! and wha will tell your poor weakly mother, that, since the hour o' your luckless clecking, has ne'er had a day to do weel? Lang, lang has she been sitting on the brink o' the grave, and this sore stroke will surely coup her in."

"How was it possible," at last exclaimed Robina, in full self-possession, "that you could put such an indelicate construction on anything that I have said?"

The leddy had by this time melted into a flood of tears, and was searching for her handkerchief to wipe her eyes; but, surprised at the firmness with which she was addressed, she looked up as she leant forward, with one hand still in her pocket, and the other grasping the arm of the elbow-chair in which she was seated.

"Yes," continued Robina, "you have committed a great error; and though I am mortified to think you could for a moment entertain so unworthy an opinion of me, I can hardly keep from laughing at the mistake."

But although the leddy was undoubtedly highly pleased to learn that she had distressed herself without reason, still, for the sake of her own

dignity, which she thought somehow compromised by what she had said, she seemed as if she could have wished there had been a little truth in the imputation; for she said—

"I'm blithe to hear you say sae, Beenie; but it was a very natural delusion on my part, for ye ken in thir novelle and play-actoring times nobody can tell what might happen. Howsever, I'm glad it's no waur. But ye maun alloo that it was a very suspectionable situation for you to be discovered colleaguing wi' Walky Milrookit in sic a clandestine manner; and, therefore, I see that nae better can be made o't but to bring a purpose o' marriage to pass between you, as I was saying, without fashing your father about it till it's by-hand, when, after he has got his ramping and stamping over, he'll come to himsel' and mak us a' jocose."

The conversation was continued with the same sort of consistency, as far as the old lady was concerned, till Mrs Milrookit and Dirdumwhamle, with their son, arrived.

Young Milrookit, as we have already intimated, was, in point of personal figure, not much inferior to James; and though he certainly was attached to his cousin Robina with unfeigned affection, he had still so much of the leaven of his father in him that her prospective chance of succeeding to the estate of Kittlestonheugh had undoubtedly some influence in heightening the glow of his passion.

A marriage with her was as early and as ardently the chief object of his father's ambition as the union with his cousin Walkinshaw had been with hers; and the hope of seeing it consummated made the old gentleman, instead of settling him in any town business, resolve to make him a farmer, that he might one day be qualified to undertake the management of the Kittlestonheugh estate. It is therefore unnecessary to mention that, when Robina and her lover had retired, on being told by their grandmother they might "divert themselves in another room," Dirdumwhamle engaged, with the most sympathetic alacrity, in the scheme, as he called it, to make the two affectionate young things happy. But what passed will be better told in a new chapter.

CHAPTER LXXIV

INDEED, leddy," said the laird of Dirdum-whamle when she told him of the detection, as she called it, of Robina's notion of his son, "blood ye ken's thicker than water; and I havena been without a thought mysel' that there was something by the common o' cousinship atween them. But hearing, as we often a' have done, of the great instancy that my gude-brother was in for a match tweesh her and James, I couldna think of making mysel' an interloper. But if it's ordaint that she prefers Walky, I'm sure I can see nae harm in you and me giving the twa young things a bit canny shove onward in the road to a blithesome bridal."

"I am thinking," rejoined his wife, "that, perhaps, it might be as prudent and more friendly to wait the upshot o' her father's endeavours wi' James; for even although he should be worked into a compliancy, still there will be no marriage, and then Robina can avow her partiality for Walky."

"Meg," replied the leddy, "ye speak as one of the foolish women—ye ken naething about it;

your brother Geordie's just his father's ain gett, and winna be put off frae his intents by a' the powers of law and government. Let him ance get Jamie to conform, and he'll soon thraw Beenie into an obedience, and what will then become o' your Walky? Na, na, Dirdumwhamle, heed her not; she lacketh understanding. It's you and me, laird, that maun work the wherry in this breeze—ye're a man o' experience in the ways o' matrimony, having been, as we all know, thrice married, and I am an aged woman, that hasna travelled the world for sax-and-seventy years without hearing the toast o' 'Love and opportunity.' Now, havena we the love ready-made to our hands in the fond affection of Beenie and Walky? And surely neither o' us is in such a beggary o' capacity that we're no able to conceit a time and place for an opportunity. Had it been, as I had at ae time this very day a kind of a because to jealouse, I'll no say what, it was my purpose to hae sent for a minister or a magistrate, and got an unregular marriage declared outright —though it would hae gi'en us a' het hearts and red faces for liveries. Noo, laird, ye're a man o' sagacity and judgment: dinna ye think, though we haena just sic an exploit to break our hearts wi' shame and tribulation, that we might ettle at something o' the same sort? And there can be no sin in't, Meg; for is't no commanded in Scripture to increase and multiply? And what we are wising to bring about is a purpose o' marriage,

which is the natural way o' plenishing the earth and raising an increase o' the children of men."

Much and devoutly as the laird of Dirdum-whamle wished for such a consummation, he was not quite prepared for proceedings of so sudden and hasty a character; and being a personage of some worldly prudence, eagerly as he longed for the match, he was averse to expose himself to any strictures for the part he might take in promoting it. Accordingly, instead of acquiescing at once in his mother-in-law's suggestion, he said jocularly—

"Hooly, hooly, leddy; it may come vera weel off Walky and Robina's hands to make a private marriage for themselves, poor young things; but it never will do for the like o' you and me to mess or mell in the matter, by ony open countenancing o' a ceremony. It's vera true that I see nae objection to the match, and would think I did nae ill in the way o' a quiet conneevance to help them on in their courtship; but things are no ripe for an aff-hand ploy."

"I'm glad to hear you say sae," interposed Mrs Milrookit; "for really my mother seems fey about this connection; and nae gude can come o' onything sae rashly devised. My brother would, in my opinion, have great cause to complain were the gudeman to be art or part in ony such conspiracy."

The leddy never liked to have her judgment called in question, (indeed, what ladies do?), and

still less by a person so much her inferior in point of understanding (so she herself thought) as her daughter.

"My word, Meg," was her reply, "but t'ou has a stock o' impudence, to haud up thy snout in that gait to the she that bore thee! Am I one of these that hae, by reason of more strength, amaist attain't to the age of fourscore, without learning the right frae the wrang o' a' moral conduct, as that delightful man, Dr Pringle o' Garnock, said in his sermon on the Fast Day, when he preached in the Wynd Kirk, that t'ou has the spirit o' sedition to tell me that I hae lost my solid judgment, when I'm labouring in the vineyard o' thy family? Dirdumwhamle, your wife there, she's my dochter, and sorry am I to say't; but it's well known, and I dinna misdoot ye hae found it to your cost, that she is a most unreasonable, narrow, contracted woman, and wi' a' her 'conomical throughgality — her direction-books to mak grozart wine for deil-be-licket, and her Katy Fisher's cookery, whereby she would gar us trow she can mak fat kail o' chucky-stanes and an auld horse-shoe—we a' ken, and ye ken, laird, warst o' a', that she flings away the peas, and maks her hotch-potch wi' the shawps,[1] or, as the auld by-word says, tynes[2] bottles gathering straes. So what need the like o' you and me sit in council, and the Shanedrims of the people, wi' ane o' the stupidest bawkie

[1] *Shawps.* Shells. [2] *Tynes.* Loses.

birds[1] that e'er the Maker o't took the trouble to put the breath o' life in? Fey, did ye say?—that's a word o' discretion to fling at the head o' your aged parent! Howsever, it's no worth my condescendence to lose my temper wi' the like o' her. But, Meg Walkinshaw, or Mrs Milrookit, though ye be there afore your gudeman, the next time ye diminish my understanding, I'll maybe let ye ken what it is to blaspheme your mother; so tak heed lest ye fall. And now, to wind up the thread o' what we were discoursing anent: It's my opinion, Dirdumwhamle, we should put no molestation in the way o' that purpose o' marriage. So, if ye dinna like to tell your son to gang for a minister, I'll do it myself; and the sooner it's by-hand and awa, as the sang sings, the sooner we'll a' be in a situation to covenant and 'gree again wi' Beenie's father."

The laird was delighted to see the haste and heartiness with which the leddy was resolved to consummate the match; but he said—

"Do as ye like, leddy—do as ye like; but I'll no coom[2] my fingers wi' meddling in ony sic project. The wark be a' your ain."

"Surely neither you nor that unreverend and misleart trumphy your wife, our Meg, would refuse to be present at the occasion?"

"'Deed, leddy, I'm unco sweer't; I'll no deny that," replied Dirdumwhamle.

"If it is to take place this day, and in this

[1] *Bawkie birds.* Bats. [2] *Coom.* Dirty.

house, gudeman, I'm sure it will be ill put on blateness, on both your part and mine, no to be present," said Mrs Milrookit.

"Noo, that's a word o' sense, Meg," cried her mother exultingly; "that's something like the sagacity o' a Christian parent. Surely it would be a most pagan-like thing for the father and mother o' the bridegroom to be in the house, to ken o' what was going on, and, fidging fain, as ye baith are, for the comfort it's to bring to us a', to sit in another room wi' a cloud on your brows, and your hands in a mournful posture. Awa, awa, Dirdumwhamle, wi' the like o' that; I hae nae brow o' sic worldly hypocrisy. But we hae nae time to lose, for your gude-brother will soon be back frae Camrachle, and I would fain hae a' ouer before he comes. Hech, sirs! but it will be a sport if we can get him to be present at the wedding-dinner, and he ken naething about it. So I'll just send the lass at ance for Dr De'il-fear,—for it's a great thing, ye ken, to get a bridal blessed wi' the breath o' a sound orthodox; and I'll gae ben and tell Beenie and Walky that they maun mak some sort o' a preparation."

"But when they are married, what's to become o' them?—where are they to bide?—and what hae they to live upon?" said Mrs Milrookit anxiously.

"Dinna ye fash your head, Meg," said her mother, "about ony sic trivialities. They can stay wi' me till after the reconciliation, when nae doot

her father will alloo a genteel aliment. So we needna vex oursel's about taking thought for to-morrow; sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. But ye hae bonny gooses and a' manner o' poultry at the Dirdumwhamle. So, as we'll need something to keep the banes green, ye may just send us a tasting: na, for that matter, we'll no cast out wi' the like o' a sooking grumphie; or, if ye were chancing to kill a sheep, a side o' mutton's worth house-room; and butter and eggs—I'm no a novice, as the Renfrew doctor said—butter and eggs may dine a provice, wi' the help o' bread for kitchen."

In concluding this speech, the leddy, who had in the meantime risen, gave a joyous geck with her head, and swept triumphantly out of the room.

CHAPTER LXXV

In the meantime, Kittlestonheugh (as, according to the Scottish fashion, we should denominate Squire Walkinshaw) had proceeded to Camrachle, where he arrived at his sister-in-law's door just as Mrs Eadie was taking her leave, with the intention of writing to her relation, Mr Frazer, on behalf of James. As the carriage drove up, Mrs Charles, on seeing it approach, begged her to stop; but, upon second thoughts, it was considered better that she should not remain, and also that she should defer her letter to Glengael until after the interview. She was accordingly at the door when the laird alighted, who, being but slightly acquainted with her, only bowed, and was passing on without speaking into the house, when she arrested him by one of her keen and supreme looks, of which few could withstand the searching brightness.

"Mr Walkinshaw," said she, after eyeing him inquisitively for two or three seconds, "before you go to Mrs Charles, I would speak with you."

It would not be easy to explain the reason which induced Mrs Eadie so suddenly to deter-

mine on interfering, especially after what had just passed; but still, as she did so, we are bound, without investigating her motives too curiously, to relate the sequel.

Mr Walkinshaw bowed, thereby intimating his acquiescence; and she walked on towards the manse with slow steps and a majestic attitude, followed by the visitor in silence. But she had not advanced above four or five paces when she turned round, and, touching him emphatically on the arm, said—

"Let us not disturb the minister, but go into the churchyard; we can converse there—the dead are fit witnesses to what I have to say."

Notwithstanding all his worldliness, there was something so striking in her august air, the impressive melancholy of her countenance, and the solemn Siddonian grandeur of her voice, that Kittlestonheugh was awed, and could only at the moment again intimate his acquiescence by a profound bow. She then proceeded with her wonted dignity towards the churchyard, and entering the stile which opened into it, she walked on to the south side of the church. The sun by this time had exhaled away the morning mists, and was shining brightly on the venerable edifice, and on the humble tombs and frail memorials erected nigh.

"Here," said she, stopping when they had reached the small turf-less space which the feet of the rustic Sabbath pilgrims had trodden bare

in front of the southern door, "here let us stop; the sun shines warmly here, and the church will shelter us from the cold north-east wind. Mr Walkinshaw, I am glad that we have met before you entered yon unhappy house. The inmates are not in circumstances to contend with adversity: your sister loves her children too well not to wish that her son may obtain the great advantages which your proposal to him holds out; and he has too kind and generous a heart not to go far, and willingly, to sacrifice much on her account. You have it, therefore, in your power to make a family, which has hitherto known little else but misfortune, miserable or happy."

"It cannot, I hope, madam," was his reply, "be thought of me that I should not desire greatly to make them happy. Since you are acquainted with what has taken place, you will do me the justice to admit that I could do nothing more expressive of the regard I entertain for my nephew, and of the esteem in which I hold his mother, than by offering him my only child in marriage, and with such a dowry, too, as no one in his situation could almost presume to expect."

Mrs Eadie did not make any immediate answer, but again fixed her bright and penetrating eye for a few seconds so intensely on his countenance that he turned aside from its irresistible ray.

"What you say, sir, sounds well; but if, in seeking to confer that benefit, you mar for ever the happiness you wish to make, and know before

that such must be the consequence, some other reason than either regard for your nephew or esteem for his mother must be the actuating spring that urges you to persevere."

Firm of purpose, and fortified in resolution, as Kittlestonheugh was, something in both the tone and the substance of this speech made him thrill from head to foot.

"What other motive than my affection can I have?" said he.

"Interest," replied Mrs Eadie, with a look that withered him to the heart. "Interest; nothing else ever made a man force those to be unhappy whom he professed to love."

"I am sorry, madam, that you think so ill of me," was his reply, expressed coldly and haughtily.

"I did not wish you to come here that we should enter into any debate; but only to entreat that you will not press your wish for the marriage too urgently, because, out of the love and reverence which your nephew has for his mother, I fear he may be worked on to comply."

"Fear! madam. I cannot understand your meaning."

The glance that Mrs Eadie darted at these words convinced him it was in vain to equivocate with her.

"Mr Walkinshaw," said she, after another long pause, and a keen and suspicious scrutiny of his face, "it has always been reported that some of my mother's family possessed the gift

of a discerning spirit. This morning, when I saw you alight from your carriage, I felt as if the mantle of my ancestors had fallen upon me. It is a hallowed and oracular inheritance; and, under its mysterious inspirations, I dare not disguise what I feel. You have come to-day——"

"Really, madam," interrupted the merchant testily, "I come for some better purpose than to listen to Highland stories about the second-sight. I must wish you good-morning."

In saying this, he turned round, and was moving to go away, when the lady, throwing back her shawl, magnificently raised her hand, and took hold of him by the arm.

"Stop, Mr Walkinshaw, this is a place of truth. There is no deceit in death and the grave. Life and the living may impose upon us; but here, where we stand, among the sincere—the dead—I tell you, and your heart, sir, knows that what I tell you is true, there is no affection—no love for your nephew, nor respect for his mother—in the undivulged motives of that seeming kindness with which you are, shall I say plainly, seeking their ruin?"

The impassioned gestures and the suppressed energy with which this was said gave an awful and mysterious effect to expressions that were in themselves simple; insomuch that the astonished man of the world regarded her for some time with a mingled sentiment of wonder and awe. At last he said, with a sneer,—

"Upon my word, Mrs Eadie, the minister him-

self could hardly preach with more eloquence. It is a long time since I have been so lectured; and I should like to know by what authority I am so brought to book?"

The sarcastic tone in which this was said provoked the pride and Highland blood of the lady, who, stepping back, and raising her right arm with a towering grandeur, shook it over him as she said—

"I have no more to say; the fate of the blood of Glengael is twined and twisted with the destiny of Mrs Charles Walkinshaw's family; but at your dying hour you will remember what I have said, and, trembling, think of this place—of these tombs, these doors that lead into the judgment-chamber of heaven, and of yon sun, that is the eye of the Almighty's chief sentinel over man."

She then dropped her hand, and walking slowly past him, went straight towards the manse, the door of which she had almost reached before he recovered himself from the amazement and apprehension with which he followed her with his eye. His feelings, however, he soon so far mastered in outward appearance that he even assumed an air of ineffable contempt; but, nevertheless, an impression had been so stamped by her mystery and menace that, in returning towards the dwelling of Mrs Charles, he gradually fell into a moody state of thoughtfulness and abstraction.

CHAPTER LXXVI

MRS CHARLES WALKINSHAW had been a good deal surprised by the abrupt manner in which Mrs Eadie had intercepted her brother-in-law. Her son, not a little pleased of an opportunity to avoid his uncle, no sooner saw them pass the window than he made his escape from the house. Observing that they did not go to the manse, but turned off towards the churchyard, he hastened to take refuge with his old preceptor the minister, possibly to see Ellen Frazer. The relation, however, of what passed in the manse does not fall within the scope of our narrative, particularly as it will be easily comprehended and understood by its effects. We have, therefore, only at present to mention that Mrs Charles, in the meantime, sat in wonder and expectation, observing to her daughter, a mild and unobtrusive girl, who seldom spoke many sentences at a time, that she thought of late Mrs Eadie seemed unusually attentive to her Highland superstitions. "She has been, I think, not so well of late—her nerves are evidently in a high state of excitement. It is much

to be regretted that she is so indisposed at this time, when we stand so much in need of her advice."

Mary replied that she had noticed with sorrow a very great change indeed in their friend; and she added—

"Ellen says that she often walks out at night to the churchyard, and sits moaning over the graves of her children. It is strange, after they have been so long dead, that her grief should have so unexpectedly broken out afresh. The minister, I am sure, is very uneasy, for I have noticed that he looks paler than he used to do, and with a degree of sadness that is really very affecting."

While they were thus speaking Mr Walkinshaw came in, and the first words he said, before taking a seat, were—

"Is the minister's wife in her right mind? She seems to me a little touched. I could with difficulty preserve my gravity at her fantastical nonsense."

Mrs Charles, out of respect for her friend, did not choose to make any reply to this observation; so that her brother-in-law found himself obliged to revert to the business which had brought him to Camrachle.

"I thought James was here," said he; "what has become of him?"

"He has just stepped out. I suspect he was not exactly prepared to meet you."

"He is hot and hasty," rejoined the uncle; "we had rather an unpleasant conversation last night. I hope, since he has had time to reflect on what I said, he sees things differently."

"I am grieved," replied Mrs Charles with a sigh, "that anything should have arisen to mar the prospects that your kindness had opened to him. But young men will be headstrong; their feelings often run away with their judgment."

"But," said Kittlestonheugh, "I can forgive him. I never looked for any conduct in him different from that of others of his own age. Folly is the superfluous blossoms of youth: they drop off as the fruit forms. I hope he is not resolute in adhering to his declaration about leaving Glasgow."

"He seems at present quite resolved," replied his mother, with a deep and slow sigh, which told how heavily that determination lay upon her heart.

"Perhaps, then," said his uncle, "it may just be as well to leave him to himself for a few days; and I had better say nothing more to him on the subject."

"I think," replied Mrs Charles timidly, as if afraid that she might offend, "it is needless at present to speak to him about Robina: he must have time to reflect." She would have added, "on the great advantages of the match to him;" but knowing, as she did, the decided sentiments of her son, she paused in the unfinished sentence,

and felt vexed with herself for having said so much.

"But," inquired her brother-in-law, in some degree solaced by the manner in which she had expressed herself, "but surely the boy will not be so ridiculous as to absent himself from the counting-house?"

"He speaks of going abroad," was the soft and diffident answer.

"Impossible! He has not the means."

She then told him what he had been considering with respect to his father's old acquaintance, who had the vessel going to America.

"In that case," said his uncle, with an off-hand freedom that seemed much like generosity, "I must undertake the expense of his outfit. He will be none the worse of seeing a little of the world; and he will return to us in the course of a year or two a wiser and a better man."

"Your kindness, sir, is truly extraordinary, and I shall be most happy if he can be persuaded to avail himself of it; but his mind lies towards the army, and, if he could get a cadetcy to India, I am sure he would prefer it above all things."

"A cadetcy to India!" exclaimed the astonished uncle. "By what chance or interest could he hope for such an appointment?"

"Mrs Eadie's cousin, who bought back her father's estate, she says, has some parliamentary interest, and she intends to write him to beg his good offices for James."

Kittlestonheugh was thunderstruck :—this was a turn in the affair that he had never once imagined within the scope and range of possibility. "Do you think," said he, "that he had any view to this in his ungrateful insolence to me last night? If I thought so, every desire I had to serve him should be henceforth suppressed and extinguished."

At this crisis the door was opened, and Mr Eadie, the minister, came in, by which occurrence the conversation was interrupted, and the vehemence of Mr Walkinshaw was allowed to subside during the interchange of the common reciprocities of the morning.

"I am much grieved, Mr Walkinshaw," said the worthy clergyman, after a short pause, "to hear of this unfortunate difference with your nephew. I hope the young man will soon come to a more considerate way of thinking."

Mr Walkinshaw thought Mr Eadie a most sensible man, and could not but express his confidence that, when the boy came to see how much all his best friends condemned his conduct, and were so solicitous for his compliance, he would repent his precipitation. "We must, however," said he, "give him time. His mother tells me that he has resolved to go to America. I shall do all in my power to assist his views in that direction, not doubting in the end to reap the happiest effects."

"But before taking any step in that scheme,"

said the minister, "he has resolved to wait the issue of a letter which I have left my wife writing to her relation,—for he would prefer a military life to any other."

"From all that I can understand," replied the uncle, "Mr Frazer, your friend, will not be slack in using his interests to get him to India; for he cannot but be aware of the penniless condition of my nephew, and must be glad to get him out of his daughter's way."

There was something in this that grated the heart of the mother, and jarred on the feelings of the minister.

"No," said the latter; "on the contrary, the affection which Glengael bears to his daughter would act with him as a motive to lessen any obstacles that might oppose her happiness. Were Mrs Eadie to say—but, for many reasons, she will not yet—that she believes her young friend is attached to Ellen, I am sure Mr Frazer would exert himself, in every possible way, to advance his fortune."

"In that he would but do as I am doing," replied the merchant with a smile of self-gratulation; and he added briskly, addressing himself to his sister-in-law, "Will James accept favours from a stranger, with a view to promote a union with that stranger's daughter, and yet scorn the kindness of his uncle?"

The distressed mother had an answer ready; but long dependence on her cool and wary

brother-in-law, together with her natural gentleness, made her bury it in her heart. The minister, however, who owed him no similar obligations, and was of a more courageous nature, did more than supply what she would have said.

"The cases, Mr Walkinshaw, are not similar. The affection between your nephew and Ellen is mutual; but your favour is to get him to agree to a union at which his heart revolts."

"Revolts! You use strong language unnecessarily," was the indignant retort.

"I beg your pardon, Mr Walkinshaw," said the worthy presbyter, disturbed at the thought of being so unceremonious; "I am much interested in your nephew—I feel greatly for his present unhappy situation. I need not remind you that he has been to me, and with me, as my own son; and therefore you ought not to be surprised that I should take his part, particularly as, in so doing, I but defend the generous principles of a very noble youth."

"Well, well!" exclaimed the laird peevishly, "I need not at present trouble myself any further—I am as willing as ever to befriend him as I ought; but, from the humour he is in, it would serve no good purpose for me at present to interfere. I shall therefore return to Glasgow; and, when Mrs Eadie receives her answer, his mother will have the goodness to let me know."

With these words he hastily bade his sister-in-law good-morning, and hurried into his carriage.

"His conduct is very extraordinary," said the minister as he drove off. "There is something more than the mere regard and anxiety of an uncle in all this, especially when he knows that the proposed match is so obnoxious to his daughter. I cannot understand it; but come, Mrs Walkinshaw, let us go over to the manse. James is to dine with me to-day, and we shall be the better of all being together; for Mrs Eadie seems much out of spirits, and her health of late has not been good. Go, Mary, get your bonnet too, and come with us."

So ended the pursuit to Camrachle; and we shall now beg the courteous reader to return with us to Glasgow, where we left the leddy in high spirits, in the act of sending for the Reverend Dr De'ilfear to marry her grandchildren.

CHAPTER LXXVII

LONG before Kittlestonheugh returned to Glasgow, the indissoluble knot was tied between his daughter and her cousin, Walkinshaw Milrookit. The Laird of Dirdumwhamle was secretly enjoying this happy consummation of a scheme which he considered as securing to his son the probable reversion of an affluent fortune and a flourishing estate. Occasional flakes of fear, however, floated in the sunshine of his bosom, and fell cold for a moment on his heart. His wife was less satisfied. She knew the ardour with which her brother had pursued another object; she respected the consideration that was due to him as a parent in the disposal of his daughter; and she justly dreaded his indignation and reproaches. She was, therefore, anxious that Mr Milrookit should return with her to the country before he came back from Camrachle. But her mother, the Leddy, was in high glee, and triumphant at having so cleverly, as she thought, accomplished a most meritorious stratagem, she would not for a moment listen to the idea of their going away before dinner.

"Na; ye'll just bide where ye are," said she.

"It will be an uncolike thing no to partake o' the marriage feast, though ye hae come without a wedding garment, after I hae been at the cost and outlay o' a gigot o' mutton, a fine young poney cock, and a Florentine pie,—dainties that the like o' haena been in my house since Geordie, wi' his quirks o' law, wheedled me to connive wi' him to deprive uncle Watty o' his seven lawful senses, forbye the property. But I trow I hae now gotten the blin' side o' him at last: he'll no daur to say a word to me about a huggery-muggery matrimonial, tak my word for't; for he kens the black craw I hae to pluck wi' him anent the prank he played me in the deevilry o' the concosmentos, whilk ought in course o' justice to have entitled me to a full half of the income o' the lands. And a blithe thing, Dirdumwhamle, that would hae been to you and your wife, could we hae wrought it into a come-to-pass; for sure am I that, in my experience and throughgality, I wouldna hae tied my talent in a napkin, nor hid it in a stroopless[1] teapot, in the corner o' the press, but laid it out to usury wi' Robin Carrick. Howsever, maybe, for a' that, Meg, when I'm dead and gone, ye'll find, in the bonny pocket-book ye sewed langsyne at the boarding-school for your father, a testimony o' the advantage it was to hae had a mother. But, sirs, a wedding-day is no a time for melancholious moralising; so I'll mak a skip and a pass over o' a' matter and

[1] *Stroopless.* Without a spout.

things pertaining to sic death, and the leddy's confabbles as legacies, and kittle up your notions wi' a wee bit spree and sprose o' jocosity, afore the old man comes; for so, in course o' nature, it behoves us to ca' the bride's father, as he's now, by the benison o' Dr De'ilfear, on the lawfu' toll-road to become, in due season, an ancestor. Nae doubt, he would hae liked better had it been to one o' his ain Walkinshaws o' Kittlestonheugh; but, when folk canna get the gouden goun, they should be thankful when they get the sleeve."

While the leddy was thus holding forth to the laird and his wife, the carriage with George stopped at the door. Dirdumwhamle, notwithstanding all his inward pleasure, changed colour; Mrs Milrookit fled to another room, to which the happy pair had retired after the ceremony, that they might not be visible to any accidental visitors; and even the leddy was for a time smitten with consternation. She, however, was the first who recovered her self-possession; and, before Mr Walkinshaw was announced, she was seated in her accustomed elbow-chair with a volume of Matthew Henry's Commentary on her lap, and her spectacles on her nose, as if she had been piously reading. Dirdumwhamle sat opposite to her, and was apparently in a profound sleep, from which he was not roused until some time after the entrance of his brother-in-law.

"So, Geordie," said the leddy, taking off her spectacles, and shutting the book, as her son

entered, "what's come o' Jamie? Hae ye no brought the Douglas-tragedy-like mountebank back wi' you?"

"Let him go to the devil!" was the answer.

"That's an ill wish, Geordie. And so ye hae been a gouk's errand? But how are they a' at Camrachle?" replied the leddy; "and, to be sober, what's the callan' gaun to do? And what did he say for himsel', the kick-at-the-benweed foal that he is? If his mother had laid on the tawse better, he wouldna hae been sae skeigh. But sit down, Geordie, and tell me a' about it. First and foremost, howsever, gie that sleepy body, Dirdumwhamle, a shoogle out o' his dreams. What's set the man a snoring like the bars o' Ayr, at this time o' day, I won'er?"

But Dirdumwhamle did not require to be so shaken; for, at this juncture, he began to yawn and stretch his arms, till, suddenly seeing his brother-in-law, he started wide awake.

"I am really sorry to say, mother," resumed Kittlestonheugh, "that my jaunt to Camrachle has been of no avail. The minister's wife, who, by the way, is certainly not in her right mind, has already written to her relation, Glengael, to beg his interest to procure a cadetship to India for James; and, until she receives an answer, I will let the fellow tak his own way."

"Vera right, Geordie, vera right; ye couldna act a more prudential and Solomon-like part," replied his mother. "But, since he will to Cupar,

let him gang, and a' sorrow till him; and just compose your mind to approve o' Beenie's marriage wi' Walky, who is a lad of a methodical nature, and no a hurly-burly ramstam, like yon flea-luggit thing, Jamie."

Dirdumwhamle would fain have said amen, but it stuck in his throat. Nor had he any inducement to make any effort further by the decisive manner in which his brother-in-law declared that he would almost as soon carry his daughter's head to the churchyard as see that match.

"Weel, weel; but I dare say, Geordie, ye need nae mair waste your birr about it!" exclaimed the leddy; "for, frae something I hae heard the lad himsel' say this very day, it's no a marriage that ever noo is likely to happen in this warld;" and she winked significantly to the bridegroom's father. "But, Geordie," she continued, "there is a because that I would like to understand. How is't that ye're sae dure against Walky Milrookit? I'm sure he's a very personable lad — come o' a good family—sib to us a'; and, failing you and yours, heir o' entail to the Kittlestonheugh. Howsever, no to fash you wi' the like o' that, as I see ye're kindling, I would, just by way o' diversion, be blithe to learn how it would gang wi' you if Beenie, after a' this stramash, was to loup the window under cloud o' night wi' some gaberlunzie o' a crookit and blin' soldier-officer, or, wha kens, maybe a drunken dramatical divor frae the playhouse, wi' ill-colour't darnt silk stockings, his

coat out at the elbows, and his hat on ajee? How would you like that, Geordie? Sic misfortunes are no uncos noo-a-days."

Her son, notwithstanding the chagrin he suffered, was obliged to smile, saying, "I have really a better opinion of both Beenie's taste and her sense, than to suppose any such adventure possible."

"So hae I," replied the leddy; "but ye ken, if her character were to get sic a claut by a fox-paw, ye would be obligated to tak her hame, and mak a genteel settlement befitting your only dochter."

"I think," said George, "in such a case as you suppose, a genteel settlement would be a little more than could in reason be expected."

"So think I, Geordie. I am sure I would ne'er counsel you into ony conformity; but, though we hae nae dread nor fear o' soldier-officers or dramaticals, it's o' the nature o' a possibility that she will draw up wi' some young lad o' very creditable connexions and conduct, but wha, for some thraw o' your ain, ye wouldna let her marry. What would ye do then, Geordie? Ye would hae to settle, or ye would be a most horridable parent."

"My father, for so doing, disinherited Charles," said George gravely; and the words froze the very spirit of Dirdumwhamle.

"That's vera true, Geordie," resumed the leddy; "a bitter business it was to us a', and was the because o' your worthy father's sore latter

end. But ye ken the property's entail't; and, when it pleases the Maker to take you to Himsel', by consequence Beenie will get the estate."

"That's not so certain," replied George, jocularly looking at Dirdumwhamle. "My wife has of late been more infirm than usual, and were I to marry again, and had male heirs——"

"Hoot, wi' your male heirs and your snuffies; I hate the vera name o' sic things—they hae been the pests o' my life. It would hae been a better world without them," exclaimed the leddy; and then she added—"But we needna cast out about sic unborn babes o' Chevy Chase. Beenie's a decent lassie, and will, nae doubt, make a prudent conjugality; so a' I hae for the present to say is that I expeck ye'll tak your dinner wi' us. Indeed, considering what has happened, it wouldna be pleasant to you to be seen on the planestanes the day; for I'm really sorry to see, Geordie, that ye're no just in your right jocularity. Howsever, as we're to hae a bit ploy, I request and hope ye'll bide wi' us, and help to carve the bubbly-jock, whilk is a beast, as I hae heard your father often say, that required the skill o' a doctor, the strength o' a butcher, and the practical hand o' a Glasgow magistrate to diject."

Nothing more particular passed before dinner, the hour of which was drawing near; but a wedding-feast is, at any time, worthy of a chapter.

CHAPTER LXXVIII

THE conversation which the leddy, to do her justice, had, considering her peculiar humour and character, so adroitly managed with the bride's father, did not tend to produce the happiest feelings among the conscious wedding guests. Both the Laird of Dirdumwhamle and his wife were uneasy and out of countenance, and the happy pair were as miserable as ever a couple of clandestine lovers, in the full possession of all their wishes, could possibly be. But their reverend grandmother, neither daunted nor dismayed, was in the full enjoyment of a triumph, and eager in the anticipation of accomplishing, by her dexterous address, the felicitous work which, in her own opinion, she had so well begun. Accordingly, dinner was served, with an air of glee and pride so marked that Kittlestonheugh was struck with it, but said nothing; and, during the whole of the dijection of the dinner, as his mother persisted in calling the carving, he felt himself frequently on the point of inquiring what had put her into such uncommon good-humour. But she did not deem

the time yet come for a disclosure, and went on in the most jocund spirits possible, praising the dishes, and cajoling her guests to partake.

"It's extraordinar to me, Beenie," said she to the bride, "to lo and behold you sitting as mim as a May puddock, when you see us a' here met for a blithesome occasion,—and Walky, what's come ouer thee that thou's no a bit mair brisk than the statute o' marble-stane that I ance saw in that sink o' deceitfulness, the Parliament House o' Embrough? As for our Meg, thy mother, she was aye one of your Moll-on-the-coals, a sigher o' sadness, and I'm none surprised to see her in the hypocondoricals; but for Dirdumwhamle, your respectit father, a man o' property, family, and connexions—the three cardinal points o' genteelity—to be as one in doleful dumps is sic a doolie doomster that uncle Geordie, there whar he sits, like a sow playing on a trump, is a perfect beautiful Absalom in a sense o' comparison. Howsever, no to let us just fa' knickety-knock, frae side to side, till our harns[1] are splattered at the bottom o' the well o' despair, I'll gie you a toast, a thing which, but at an occasion, I ne'er think o' minting, and this toast ye maun a' mak a lippy.[2] Geordie, my son and bairn, ye ken as weel as I ken what a happy matrimonial your sister has had wi' Dirdumwhamle, and, Dirdumwhamle, I needna say to you, ye hae found her a winsome helpmate; and

[1] *Harns.* Brains. [2] *Lippy.* A bumper.

surely, Meg, Mr Milrookit has been to you a most cordial husband. Noo, what I would propose for a propine, Geordie, is—Health and happiness to Mr and Mrs Milrookit, and may they long enjoy many happy returns o' this day."

The toast was drank with great glee; but, without entering into any particular exposition of the respective feelings of the party, we shall just simply notice, as we proceed, that the leddy gave a significant nod and a wink both to the bride and bridegroom, while the bride's father was seized with a most immoderate fit of laughing at, what he supposed, the ludicrous eccentricity of his mother.

"Noo, Geordie, my man," continued the leddy, "seeing ye're in sic a state o' mirth and jocundity, and knowing, as we a' know, that life is but a weaver's shuttle, and Time a wabster that works for Death, Eternity, and Co., great wholesale merchants; but for a' that, I am creditably informed they'll be obligated, some day, to mak a sequester,— Howsever, that's nane o' our concerns just now; but, Geordie, as I was saying, I would fain tell you o' an exploit."

"I am sure," said he, laughing, "you never appeared to me so capable to tell it well. What is it?"

The leddy did not immediately reply; but looking significantly round the table, she made a short pause, and then said—

"Do you know that ever since Adam and Eve

ate the forbidden fruit, the life o' man has been growing shorter and shorter? To me—noo sax-and-seventy year auld—the monthly moon's but as a glaik[1] on the wall, the spring but as a butter-flee that taks the wings o' the morning, and a' the summer only as the tinkling o' a cymbal; as for hairst and winter, they're the shadows o' death; the whilk is an admonishment that I should not be overly gair anent the world, but mak mysel' and others happy, by taking the sanctified use o' what I hae—so Geordie and sirs, ye'll fill another glass."

Another glass was filled, and the leddy resumed, all her guests, save her son, sitting with the solemn aspects of expectation. The countenance of Kittlestonheugh alone was bright with admiration at the extraordinary spirits and garrulity of his mother.

"Noo, Geordie," she resumed, "as life is but a vapour, a puff out o' the stroop o' the tea-kettle o' Time, let us a' consent to mak one another happy; and there being nae likelihood that ever Jamie Walkinshaw will colleague wi' Beenie, your dochter, I would fain hope ye'll gie her and Walky there baith your benison and an aliment to mak them happy."

George pushed back his chair, and looked as fiercely and as proudly as any angry and indignant gentleman could well do; but he said nothing.

[1] *Glaik.* A passing gleam.

"Na," said the leddy; "if that's the gait o't, ye shall hae't as ye will hae't. It's no in your power to mak them unhappy."

"Mother, what do you mean?" was his exclamation.

"Just that I hae a because for what I mean; but, unless ye compose yoursel', I'll no tell you the night—and, in trouth, for that matter, if ye dinna behave wi' mair reverence to your aged parent, and no bring my grey hairs wi' sorrow to the grave, I'll no tell you at a'."

"This is inexplicable," cried her son. "In the name of goodness, to what do you allude?—of what do you complain?"

"Muckle, muckle hae I to complain o'," was the pathetic reply. "If your worthy father had been to the fore, ye wouldna daur't to hae spoken wi' sic unreverence to me. But what hae I to expeck in this world noo? When the laird lights the leddy, so does a' the kitchen boys; and your behaviour, Geordie, is an unco warrandice to every one to lift the hoof against me in my auld days."

"Good heavens!" cried he, "what have I done?"

"What hae ye no done?" exclaimed his mother. "Wasna my heart set on a match atween Beenie and Walky there—my ain grandchilder, and weel worthy o' ane anither; and haena ye sworn, for aught I ken, a triple vow that ye would ne'er gie your consent?"

"And if I have done so—she is my daughter, and I have my own reasons for doing what I have done," was his very dignified reply.

"Reasons here, or reasons there," said his mother, "I hae gude reason to know that it's no in your power to prevent it. Noo, Beenie, and noo, Walky: down on your knees, baith o' you, and mak a novelle confession that ye were married the day; and beg your father's pardon, who has been so jocose at your wedding feast that for shame he canna refuse to conciliate and mak a handsome aliment down on the nail."

The youthful pair did as they were desired. George looked at them for about a minute, and was unable to speak. He then threw a wild and resentful glance round the table, and started from his seat.

"Never mind him," said the leddy, with the most perfect equanimity; "rise, my bairns, and tak your chairs—he'll soon come to himsel'."

"He'll never come to himself—he is distracted—he is ruined—his life is blasted, and his fortune destroyed!" were the first words that burst from the astonished father; and he subjoined impatiently, "This cannot be true—it is impossible! Do you trifle with me, mother? Robina, can you have done this?"

"'Deed, Geordie, I doubt it's ouer true," replied his mother; "and it cannot be helped noo."

"But it may be punished!" was his furious exclamation. "I will never speak to one of you

again! To defraud me of my dearest purpose—to deceive my hopes—oh, you have made me miserable!"

"Ye'll be muckle the better o' your glass o' wine, Geordie—tak it, and compose yoursel', like a decent and sedate forethinking man, as ye hae been aye reputed."

He seized the glass, and dashed it into a thousand shivers on the table. All by this time had risen but the leddy; she alone kept her seat and her coolness.

"The man's gaen by himsel'," said she with the most matronly tranquillity. "He has scartit and dintit my gude mahogany table past a' the power o' bees'-wax and elbow grease to smooth. But, sirs, sit down—I expeckit far waur than a' this—I didna hope for onything like sic composity and discretion. Really, Geordie, it's heart salve to my sorrows to see that ye're a man o' a Christian meekness and resignation."

The look with which he answered this, however, was so dark, so troubled, and so lowering that it struck terror and alarm even into his mother's bosom, and instantly silenced her vain and vexatious attempt to ridicule the tempest of his feelings. She threw herself back in her chair, at once overawed and alarmed; and he suddenly turned round and left the house.

CHAPTER LXXIX

THE shock which the delicate frame of Mrs Walkinshaw of Kittlestonheugh received on hearing of her daughter's precipitate marriage, and the distress which it seemed to give her husband, acted as a stimulus to the malady which had so long undermined her health, and the same night she was suddenly seized with alarming symptoms. Next day the disease evidently made such rapid progress that even the doctors ventured to express their apprehensions of a speedy and fatal issue.

In the meantime, the leddy was doing all in her power to keep up the spirits of the young couple, by the reiterated declaration that, as soon as her son "had come to himsel'," as she said, "he would come down with a most genteel settlement." But day after day passed, and there was no indication of any relenting on his part, and Robina, as we still must continue to call her, was not only depressed with the thought of her rashness, but grieved for the effect it had produced on her mother.

None of the party, however, suffered more than

the Laird of Dirdumwhamle. He heard of the acceleration with which the indisposition of Mrs Walkinshaw was proceeding to a crisis, and, knowing the sentiments of his brother-in-law with respect to male heirs, he could not disguise to himself the hazard that he ran of seeing his son cut out from the succession to the Kittlestonheugh estate; and the pang of this thought was sharpened and barbed by the reflection that he had himself contributed and administered to an event which, but for the marriage, would probably have been procrastinated for years, during which it was impossible to say what might have happened.

At Camrachle, the news of the marriage diffused unmingled satisfaction. Mrs Charles Walkinshaw saw in it the happy escape of her son from a connection that might have embittered his life, and cherished the hope that her brother-in-law would still continue his friendship and kindness.

Walkinshaw himself was still more delighted with the event than his mother. He laughed at the dexterity with which his grandmother had brought it about; and, exulting in the feeling of liberty which it gave to himself, he exclaimed, "We shall now see whether, indeed, my uncle was actuated towards me by the affection he professed, or by some motive of which the springs are not yet discovered."

The minister, who was present at this sally, said little; but he agreed with his young friend

that the event would soon put his uncle's affections to the test. I cannot explain to myself," was his only observation, "why we should all so unaccountably distrust the professions of your uncle, and suppose, with so little reason, in truth against the evidence of facts, that he is not actuated by the purest and kindest motives."

"That very suspicion," said Mrs Eadie mysteriously, "is to me a sufficient proof that he is not so sincere in his professions as he gets the credit of being. But I know not how it is that, in this marriage, and in the sudden illness of his wife, I perceive the tokens of great good to our friends."

"In the marriage," replied the minister, "I certainly do see something which gives me reason to rejoice; but I confess that the illness of Mrs Walkinshaw does not appear to me to bode any good. On the contrary, I have no doubt, were she dying, that her husband will not be long without a young wife."

"Did not I tell you," said Mrs Eadie, turning to Mrs Charles, "that there would be a death before the good to come by Glengael, to you or yours, would be gathered? Mrs Walkinshaw of Kittlestonheugh is doomed to die soon; when this event comes to pass, let us watch the issues and births of time."

"You grow more and more mystical every day," said her husband pensively. "I am sorry to observe how much you indulge yourself in

superstitious anticipations; you ought to struggle against them."

"I cannot," replied the majestic leddy, with solemnity. "The mortal dwelling of my spirit is shattered, and lights and glimpses of hereafter are breaking in upon me. It has been ever so with all my mother's race. The gift is an ancient inheritance of our blood; but it comes not to us till earthly things begin to lose their hold on our affections. The sense of it is to me an assurance that the bark of life has borne me to the river's mouth. I shall now soon pass that headland beyond which lies the open sea: from the islands therein no one ever returns."

Mr Eadie sighed; and all present regarded her with compassion, for her benign countenance was strangely pale; her brilliant eyes shone with a supernatural lustre; and there was a wild and incommunicable air in her look, mysteriously in unison with the oracular enthusiasm of her melancholy.

At this juncture a letter was handed in. It was the answer from Glengael to Mrs Eadie's application respecting Walkinshaw; and it had the effect of changing the painful tenor of the conversation.

The contents were in the highest degree satisfactory. Mr Frazer not only promised his influence, declaring that he considered himself as the agent of the family interests, but said that he had no doubt of procuring at once the cadetcy; stating, at the same time, that the progress and

complexion of the French Revolution rendered it probable that Government would find it expedient to augment the army, in which case a commission for young Walkinshaw would be readily obtained; and he concluded with expressions of his sorrow at hearing his kinswoman had of late been so unwell, urging her to visit him at Glengael Castle, to which the family was on the point of removing for the summer, and where her native air might, perhaps, essentially contribute to her recovery.

"Yes," said she, after having read the letter aloud and congratulated Walkinshaw on the prospect which had opened; "yes; I will visit Glengael. The spirits of my fathers hover in the silence of those mountains, and dwell in the loneliness of the heath. A voice within has long told me that my home is there, and I have been an exile since I left it."

"My dear Gertrude," said Mr Eadie, "you distress me exceedingly this morning. To hear you say so pains me to the heart. It seems to imply that you have not been happy with me."

"I was happy with you," was her impressive answer. "I was happy; but then I thought the hopes of my youth had perished. The woeful discovery that rose like a ghost upon me withered my spirit; and the death of my children has since extinguished the love of life. Still, while the corporeal tenement remained in some degree entire, I felt not as I now feel; but the door is thrown open for my departure. I feel the airs

of the world of spirits blowing in upon me; and as I look round to see if I have set my house in order, all the past of life appears in a thousand pictures, and the most vivid in the series are the sunny landscapes of my early years."

Mr Eadie saw that it was in vain to reason with his wife in such a mood; and the Walkinshaws sympathised with the tenderness that dictated his forbearance, while James turned the conversation, by proposing to his sister and Ellen that they should walk into Glasgow next day, to pay their respects to the young couple.

Doubtless there was a little waggery at the bottom of this proposition; but there was also something of a graver feeling. He was desirous to ascertain what effect the marriage of Robina had produced on his uncle with respect to himself, and also to communicate, through the medium of his grandmother, the favourable result of the application to Glengael, in the hope that, if there was any sincerity in the professions of partiality with which he had been flattered, his uncle would assist him in his outfit either for India or the army. Accordingly, the walk was arranged as he proposed; but the roads in the morning were so deep and sloughy that the ladies did not accompany him,—a disappointment which, however acute it might be to him, was hailed as a godsend by the leddy, whose troubles and vexations of spirit had, from the wedding-day, continued to increase, and still no hope of alleviation appeared.

CHAPTER LXXX

"REALLY," said the leddy, after Walkinshaw had told her the news, and that only the wetness of the road had prevented his sister and Ellen from coming with him to town; "really, Jamie, to tell you the gude's truth, though I would hae been blithe to see Mary, and that weel-bred lassie, your joe, Nell Frizel, I'm very thankful they haena come; for, unless I soon get some relief, I'll be herrit out o' house and hall wi' Beenie and Walky—twa thoughtless wantons: set them up wi' a clandestine marriage in their teens! it's enough to put marriages out of fashion."

"I thought," replied Walkinshaw, playing with her humours, "that the marriage was all your own doing."

"My doing, Jamie Walkinshaw! Wha daurs to say the like o' that? I'm as clear o't as the child unborn,—to be sure they were married here, but that was no fault o' mine—my twa grandchildren, it could ne'er be expected that I would let them be married on the crown o' the causey. But wasna baith his mother and father present, and is that no gospel evidence that I was but an innocent

onlooker? No, no, Jamie; whomsoever ye hear giving me the wyte o' ony sic Gretna Green job, I redde ye put your foot on the spark, and no let it singe my character. I'm abundantly and overmuch punished already, for the harmless jocosity, in the cost and cumbering o' their keeping."

"Well, but unless you had sanctioned their marriage, and approved o't beforehand, they would never have thought of taking up their residence with you."

"Ye're no far wrang there, Jamie: I'll no deny that I gied my approbation, and I would hae done as muckle for your happiness, had ye been o' a right conforming spirit and married Beenie, by the whilk a' this hobleshow would hae been spare't; but there's an awful difference between approving o' a match, and providing a living and house-room, bed, board, and washing for two married persons,—and so, although it may be said in a sense that I had a finger in the pie, yet everybody who kens me, kens vera weel that I would ne'er hae meddled wi' ony sic gunpowder plot, had there been the least likelihood that it would bring upon me sic a heavy handful. In short, nobody, Jamie, has been more imposed upon than I hae been—I'm the only sufferer. De'il-be-licket has it cost Dirdumwhamle, but an auld Muscovy duck, that he got sent him frae ane o' your uncle's Jamaica skippers two years ago—and it was then past laying. We smoor't it wi' ingans the day afore yesterday, but ye might as

soon hae tried to mak a dinner o' a hesp o' seven heere yarn, for it was as teugh as the grannie of the cock that craw't to Peter."[1]

"But surely," said Walkinshaw, affecting to condole with her, "surely my uncle, when he has had time to cool, will come forward with something handsome."

"Surely—na, an he dinna do that, what's to become o' me? Oh! Jamie, your uncle's no a man like your worthy grandfather: he was a saint o' a Christian disposition. When your father married against both his will and mine, he didna gar the house dirl wi' his stamp to the quaking foundation; but on the Lord's day thereafter took me by the arm,—oh! he was o' a kindly nature,—and we gaed ouer thegither, and wished your father and mother joy, wi' a hunder pound in our hand: that was acting the parent's part!"

"But, notwithstanding all that kindness, you know he disinherited my father," replied Walkinshaw seriously, "and I am still suffering the consequences."

"The best o' men, Jamie," said the leddy, sympathisingly, "are no perfect, and your grandfather, I'll ne'er maintain, wasna a no mere man: so anent the disinheritance there was aye something I couldna weel understand; for, although I had got an inkling o' the law frae my father, who was a deacon at a plea[2]—as a' the lords in

[1] One of the Laird of Logan's jests.

[2] *A deacon at a plea.* A head-man at a plea.

Embro' could testificate—still there was a because in that act of sederunt and session, the whilk, in my opinion, required an interlocutor frae the Lord Ordinary to expiscate and expone, and, no doubt, had your grandfather been spared, there would hae been a rectification. But, wae's me, the Lord took him to Himsel' in the very hour when Mr Keelevin, the lawyer, was doun on his knees reading a scantling o' a new last will and settlement. Eh! Jamie, that was a moving sight: before I could get a pen, to put in your dying grandfather's hand, to sign the paper, he took his departal to a better world, where, we are taught to hope, there are neither lawyers nor laws."

"But, if my uncle will not make a settlement on Robina, what will you do?" said Walkinshaw, laughing.

"Haud your tongue, and dinna terrify folk wi' ony sic impossibility!" exclaimed the leddy. "Poor man, he has something else to think o' at present! Isna your aunty brought nigh unto the gates o' death? Would ye expeck him to be thinking o' marriage settlements and wedding banquets when death's so busy in his dwelling? Ye're an unfeeling creature, Jamie; but the army's the best place for sic graceless getts. Whan do ye begin to spend your half-crown out o' saxpence a day? And is Nell Frizel to carry your knapsack? Weel, I aye thought she was a cannonading character, and I'll be none sur-

prised o' her fighting the French or the Yankee Doodles belyve, wi' a stone in the foot of a stocking,—for I am most creditably informed that that's the conduct o' the soldiers' wives in the field o' battle."

It was never very easy to follow the leddy, when she was on what the sailors call one of her "jawing tacks;" and Walkinshaw, who always enjoyed her company most when she was in that humour, felt little disposed to interrupt her. In order, however, to set her off in a new direction, he said—"But, when I get my appointment, I hope you'll give me something to buy a sword, which is the true bride o' a soldier."

"And a poor tocher he gets wi' her," said the leddy: "wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores, to make up a pack for beggary. No doubt, howsever, but I maun break the back o' a guinea for you."

"Nay, I expect you'll give your old friend, Robin Carrick, a forenoon's call. I'll not be satisfied if you don't."

"Well, if e'er I heard sic a stand-and-deliver-like speech since ever I was born!" exclaimed his grandmother. "Did I think, when I used to send the impudent smytcher[1] wi' my haining o' twa-three pounds to the bank, that he was contriving to commit sic a highway robbery on me at last?"

[1] *Smytcher.* A contemptuous term for a child, implying its impudence.

"But," said Walkinshaw, "I have always heard you say that there should be no step-bairns in families. Now, as you are so kind to Robina and Walky, it can never be held fair if you tie up your purse to me."

"Thou's a wheedling creature, Jamie," replied the leddy, "and nae doubt I maun do my duty, as everybody knows I hae aye done, to a' my family; but I'll soon hae little to do't wi' if the twa new-married eating moths are ordain't to devour a' my substance. But there's ae thing I'll do for thee, the whilk may be far better than making noughts in Robin Carrick's books. I'll gang out to the Kittlestonheugh, and speer for thy aunty; and though thy uncle, like a bull of Bashan, said he would not speak to me, I'll gar him fin' the weight o' a mother's tongue, and maybe, through my persuadgeon, he may be wrought to pay for thy sword and pistols, and other sinews o' war. For, to speak the truth, I'm wearying to mak a clean breast wi' him, and to tell him o' his unnaturality to his own dochter; and, what's far waur, the sin, sorrow, and iniquity, of alooing me, his aged parent, to be rookit o' plack and bawbee by twa glaikit jocklandys,[1] that dinna care what they burn, e'en though it were themselves."

But before the leddy got this laudable intention carried into effect, her daughter-in-law, to

1 *Twa glaikit jocklandys.* Rash, inconsiderate, destructive persons.

the infinite consternation of Dirdumwhamle, died ; and, for some time after that event, no opportunity presented itself, either for her to be delivered of her grudge, or for any mutual friend to pave the way to a reconciliation. Young Mrs Milrookit saw her mother, and received her last blessing ; but it was by stealth, and unknown to her father. So that, altogether, it would not have been easy, about the period of the funeral, to have named in all the royal city a more constipated family, as the leddy assured all her acquaintance the Walkinshaws and Milrookits were, baith in root and branch, herself being the wizen't and forlorn trunk o' the tree.

CHAPTER LXXXI

ON the day immediately after the funeral of her sister-in-law, Mrs Charles Walkinshaw was surprised by a visit from the widower.

"I am come," said he, "partly to relieve my mind from the weight that oppresses it, arising from an occurrence to which I need not more particularly allude, and partly to vindicate myself from the harsh insinuations of James. He will find that I have not been so sordid in my views as he so unaccountably and so unreasonably supposed, and that I am still disposed to act towards him in the same liberal spirit I have ever done. What is the result of the application to Mrs Eadie's friend? and is there any way by which I can be rendered useful in the business?"

This was said in an off-hand man-of-the-world way. It was perfectly explicit; it left no room for hesitation; but still it was not said in such a manner as to bring with it the comfort it might have done to the meek and sensitive bosom of the anxious mother.

"I know not in what terms to thank you," was her answer, diffidently and doubtingly expressed.

"Your assistance, certainly, would be most essential to James; for, now that he has received a commission in the king's army, I shall be reduced to much difficulty."

"In the king's army! I thought he was going to India!" exclaimed her brother-in-law, evidently surprised.

"So it was originally intended; but," said the mother, "Mr Frazer thought, in the present state of Europe, that it would be of more advantage for him to take his chance in the regular army, and has in consequence obtained a commission in a regiment that is to be immediately increased. He has, indeed, proved a most valuable friend; for, as the recruiting is to be in the Highlands, he has invited James to Glengael, and is to afford him his countenance to recruit among his dependents, assuring Mrs Eadie that, from the attachment of the adherents of the family, he has no doubt that, in the course of the summer, James may be able to entitle himself to a company, and then——"

This is very extraordinary friendship, thought the Glasgow merchant to himself. These Highlanders have curious ideas about friendship and kindred; but, nevertheless, when things are reduced to their money price, they are just like other people.

"But," said he aloud, "what do you mean is to take place when James has obtained a company?"

"I suppose," replied the gentle widow timidly,

she knew not wherefore, "that he will then not object to the marriage of James and Ellen."

"I think," said her brother-in-law, "he ought to have gone to India. Were he still disposed to go there, my purse shall be open to him."

"He could not hope for such rapid promotion as he may obtain through the means of Glengael," replied Mrs Charles somewhat firmly,—so steadily, indeed, that it disconcerted the laird; still he preserved his external equanimity, and said—

"Nevertheless, I am willing to assist his views in whichever way they lie. What has become of him?"

Mrs Charles then told him that, in consequence of the very encouraging letter from Mr Frazer, Walkinshaw had gone to mention to his father's old friend, who had the vessel fitting out for New York, the change that had taken place in his destination, and to solicit a loan to help his outfit.

Her brother-in-law bit his lips at this information. He had obtained no little reputation among his friends for the friendship which he had shown to his unfortunate brother's family; and all those who knew his wish to accomplish a match between James and his daughter sympathised in sincerity with his disappointment. But some thing, it would not be easy to say what, troubled him when he heard this, and he said—

"I think James carries his resentment too far.

I had certainly done him no ill, and he might have applied to me before going to a stranger."

"Favours," replied the widow, "owe all their grace and gratitude to the way in which they are conferred. James has peculiar notions, and perhaps he has felt more from the manner in which you spoke to him than from the matter you said."

"Let us not revert to that subject; it recalls mortifying reflections, and the event cannot be undone. But do you then think Mr Frazer will consent to allow his daughter to marry James? She is an uncommonly fine girl, and, considering the family connexions, surely might do better."

This was said in an easy, disengaged style; but it was more assumed than sincere. Indeed, there was something in it implying an estimate of considerations, independent of affections, which struck so disagreeably on the feelings that his delicate auditor did not very well know what to say; but she added—

"James intends, as soon as we are able to make the necessary arrangements, to set out for Glengael Castle, where, as it is in a neighbourhood where there are many old officers, he will be able to procure some information with respect to the best mode of proceeding with his recruiting; and Mr Frazer has kindly said that it will be for his advantage to start from the castle."

"I suppose Miss Frazer will accompany him?" replied the widower dryly.

"No," said his sister-in-law; "she does not

go till she accompanies Mrs Eadie, who intends to pass the summer at Glengael."

"I am glad of that; her presence might interfere with his duty."

"Whom do you mean?" inquired Mrs Charles, surprised at the remark; "whose presence?" And she subjoined smilingly, "You are thinking of Ellen; and you will hardly guess that we are all of opinion here that both she and Mrs Eadie might be of great use to him on the spot. Mrs Eadie is so persuaded of it that the very circumstance of their marriage being dependent on his raising a sufficient number of men to entitle him to a company would, she says, were it known, make the sons of her father's clansmen flock around him."

"It is to be deplored that a woman, who still retains so many claims, both on her own account, and the high respectability of her birth, should have fallen into such a decay of mind," said the merchant, at a loss for a more appropriate comment on his sister-in-law's intimation. "But," continued he, "do not let James apply to any other person. I am ready and willing to advance all he may require; and, since it is determined that he ought immediately to avail himself of Mr Frazer's invitation, let him lose no time in setting off for Glengael. This, I trust," said he in a gayer humour, which but ill suited with his deep mourning, "will assure both him and Miss Frazer that I am not so much their enemy as perhaps they have been led to imagine."

Soon after this promise, the widower took his leave; but, although his whole behaviour during the visit was unexpectedly kind and considerate, and although it was impossible to withhold the epithet of liberality—nay more, even of generosity—from his offer, still it did not carry that gladness to the widow's heart which the words and the assurance were calculated to convey. On the contrary, Mrs Charles sat for some time ruminating on what had passed; and when, in the course of about an hour after, Ellen Frazer, who had been walking on the brow of the hazel-bank with Mary, came into the parlour, she looked at her for some time without speaking.

The walk had lent to the complexion of Ellen a lively rosy glow. The conversation which she had held with her companion related to her lover's hopes of renown, and it had excited emotions that at once sparkled in her eyes and fluctuated on her cheek. Her lips were vivid and smiling; her look was full of intelligence and *naïveté*, simple at once and elegant, gay, buoyant, and almost as sly as artless; and a wreath, if the expression may be allowed, of those nameless graces in which the charms of beauty are mingled with the allurements of air and manners garlanded her tall and blooming form.

She seemed to the mother of her lover a creature so adorned with loveliness and nobility that it was impossible to imagine she was not destined for some higher sphere than the humble

fortunes of Walkinshaw. But in that moment the mother herself forgot the auspices of her own youth, and how seldom it is that even beauty, the most palpable of all human excellence, obtains its proper place, or the homage of the manly heart, that Nature meant it should enjoy.

CHAPTER LXXXII

MR WALKINSHAW had not left Camrachle many minutes when his nephew appeared. James, in fact, had returned from Glasgow while his uncle was in the house, but, seeing the carriage at the door, purposely kept out of the way till it drove off.

His excursion had not been successful. He found his father's old acquaintance sufficiently cordial in the way of inquiries, and even disposed to sympathise with him when informed of his determination to go abroad; but when the army was mentioned the merchant's heart froze, and after a short pause, and the expression of some frigiverous observations with respect to the licentiousness of the military life, it was suggested that his uncle was the proper quarter to apply to. In this crisis, their conversation was interrupted by the entrance of a third party, when Walkinshaw retired.

During his walk back to Camrachle, his heart was alternately sick and saucy, depressed and proud.

He could not conceive how he had been so

deluded as to suppose that he had any right to expect friendship from the gentleman he had applied to. He felt that in so doing he acted with the greenness of a boy, and he was mortified at his own softness. Had there been any reciprocity of obligations between his father and the gentleman, the case would have been different. "Had they been for forty or fifty years," thought he, "in the mutual interchange of mercantile dependence, then perhaps I might have had some claim, and, no doubt, it would have been answered; but I was a fool to mistake civilities for friendship." Perhaps, however, had the case been even as strong as he put it, he might still have found himself quite as much deceived.

"As to making any appeal to my uncle, that was none of his business," said he to himself. "I did not ask the fellow for advice; I solicited but a small favour. There is no such heart-scalding insolence as, in refusing a solicitation, to refer the suppliant to others, and with prudential admonitions too—curse him who would beg, were it not to avoid doing worse."

This brave humour lasted for the length of more than a mile's walk, during which the young soldier marched briskly along, whistling courageous tunes, and flourishing his stick with all the cuts of the broadsword, lopping the boughs off the hedges, as if they had been the limbs of Frenchmen, and switching away the heads of the thistles and benweeds in his path, as if they had

been Parisian carmagnols, against whom, at that period, the loyalty of the British bosom was beginning to grow fretful and testy.

But the greater part of the next mile was less animated : occasionally, cowardly thoughts glimmered palely through the glorious turbulence of youthful heroism, and once or twice he paused and looked back towards Glasgow, wondering if there was any other in all that great city who might be disposed to lend him the hundred pounds he had begged for his outfit.

"There is not one," said he, and he sighed ; but in a moment after he exclaimed : "and who the devil cares ! It does not do for soldiers to think much ; let them do their duty at the moment,—that's all they have to think of ; I will go on in the track I have chosen, and trust to fortune for a windfall." Again "In the Garb of Old Gaul" was gallantly whistled, and again the hedges and thistles felt the weight of his stick.

But as he approached Camrachle his mood shifted into the minor key, and when the hazel-bank and the ash-trees, with the nests of the magpies in them, appeared in sight, the sonorous bravery of the Highland march became gradually modulated into a low and querulous version of "Lochaber no More ;" and when he discovered the carriage at his mother's door, his valour so subsided into boyish bashfulness that he shrank away, as we have already mentioned, and did not

venture to go home till he saw that his uncle had left the house.

On his entrance, however, he received a slight sensation of pleasure at seeing both his mother and sister with more comfort in their looks than he had expected, and he was, in consequence, able to tell them, with comparative indifference, the failure of his mission. His mother then related what had passed with his uncle.

The news perplexed Walkinshaw; they contradicted the opinion he had so warmly felt and expressed of his uncle; they made him feel he had acted rashly and ungratefully. But still, such strange kindness occasioned a degree of dubiety, which lessened the self-reproaches of his contrition.

"However," said he, with a light and joyous heart, "I shall not again trouble either myself or him, as I have done; but in this instance, at least, he has acted disinterestedly, and I shall cheerfully avail myself of his offer, because it is generous. I accept it also as encouragement,—after my disappointment, it is a happy omen; I will take it as a brave fellow does his bounty-money—a pledge from fortune of some famous 'all hail hereafter.'"

What his sentiments would have been had he known the tenor of his uncle's mind at that moment,—could he even but have suspected that the motive which dictated such seeming generosity, so like an honourable continuance of his

former partiality, was prompted by a wish to remove him as soon as possible from the company of Ellen Frazer, in order to supplant him in her affections,—we need not attempt to imagine. It is happy for mankind that they know so little of the ill said of them behind their backs, by one another, and of the evil that is often meditated in satire and in malice, and still oftener undertaken from motives of interest and envy. Walkinshaw, rejoicing in the good fortune that had so soon restored the alacrity of his spirits—so soon wiped away the corrosive damp of disappointment from its brightness—did not remain long with his mother and sister, but hastened to communicate the inspiring tidings to Ellen Frazer.

She was standing on the green in front of the manse when she saw him coming bounding towards her, waving his hat in triumph and exultation, and she put on a grave face, and looked so rebukingly that he halted abruptly, and said—"What's the matter?"

"It's very ridiculous to see anybody behaving so absurdly," was her cool and solemn answer.

"But I have glorious news to tell you; my uncle has come forward in the handsomest manner, and all's clear for action."

This was said in an animated manner, and intended to upset her gravity, which, from his knowledge of her disposition, he suspected was a sinless hypocrisy, put on only to tease him. But she was either serious or more resolute in

her purpose than he expected; for she replied, with the most chastising coolness,—

"I thought you were never to have anything to say again to your uncle?"

Walkinshaw felt this pierce deeper than it was intended to do, and he reddened exceedingly, as he said awkwardly,—

"True! but I have done him injustice; and had he not been one of the best dispositioned men, he would never have continued his kindness to me as he has done,—for I have treated him harshly."

"It says but little for you that, after enjoying his good-will so long, you should have thrown his favours at him, and so soon after be obliged to confess you have done him wrong."

Walkinshaw hung his head, still more and more confused. There was too much truth in the remark not to be felt as a just reproach; and, moreover, he thought it somewhat hard, as his folly had been on her account, that she should so taunt him. But Ellen, perceiving she had carried the joke a little too far, threw off her disguise, and with one of her most captivating looks and smiles, said—"Now that I have tamed you into rational sobriety, let's hear what you have got to say. Men should never be spoken to when they are huzzaing. Remember the lesson when you are with your regiment."

What further followed befits not our desultory pen to rehearse; but, during this recital of what had taken place at Glasgow, and the other inci-

dents of the day, the lovers unconsciously strayed into the minister's garden, where a most touching and beautiful dialogue ensued, of which having lost our notes, we regret, on account of our fair readers, and all his majesty's subalterns, who have not yet joined, that we cannot furnish a transcript. The result, however, was that when Ellen returned into the manse after parting from Walkinshaw, her beautiful eyes looked red and watery, and two huge tears tumbled out of them when she told her aunt that he intended to set off for Glengael in the course of two or three days.

CHAPTER LXXXIII

NEXT day Walkinshaw found himself constrained, by many motives, to go into Glasgow, in order to thank his uncle for the liberality of his offer, and, in accepting it, to ask pardon for the rudeness of his behaviour.

His reception in the counting-house was all he could have wished; it was even more cordial than the occasion required, and the cheque given, as the realisation of the promise, considerably exceeded the necessary amount. Emboldened by so much kindness, Walkinshaw, who felt for his cousins, and really sympathised with the leddy under the burden of expense which she had brought upon herself, ventured to intercede in their behalf, and he was gratified with his uncle's answer.

"I am pleased, James," said he, "that you take so great an interest in them; but make your mind easy: for although I have been shamefully used, and cannot but long resent it, still, as a man, I ought not to indulge my anger too far. I therefore give you liberty to go and tell them that, although I do not mean to hold any inter-

course with Robina and her husband, I have, nevertheless, ordered my man of business to prepare a deed of settlement on her, such as I ought to make on my daughter."

Walkinshaw believed, when he heard this, that he possessed no faculty whatever to penetrate the depths of character, so bright and shining did all the virtues of his uncle at that moment appear, — virtues of which, a month before, he did not conceive he possessed a single spark. It may therefore be easily imagined that he hastened with light steps and long strides towards his grandmother's house, to communicate the generous tidings. But, on reaching the door, he met the old lady, wrapped up as it seemed for a journey, with her maid, coming out, carrying a small trunk under her arm. On seeing him, she made a movement to return; but, suddenly recollecting herself, she said—"Jamie, I hae nae time, for I'm gaun to catch the Greenock flying coach at the Black Bull, and ye can come wi' me."

"But what has become o' Robina?" cried he, surprised at this intelligence and sudden movement.

His grandmother took hold of him by the arm, and giving it an indescribable squeeze of exultation, said—"I'll tell you, it's just a sport. They would need long spoons that sup parridge wi' the de'il, or the like o' me, ye maun ken. I was just like to be devoured into beggary by them: ae frien' after another calling, glasses o' wine ne'er

devauling; the corks playing clunk in the kitchen frae morning to night, as if they had been in a change-house on a fair-day. I could stand it no longer. So yesterday, when that Nabal, Dirdumwhamle, sent us a pair o' his hungered hens, I told baith Beenie and Walky that they were obligated to go and thank their parents, and to pay them a marriage visit for a day or twa, although we're a' in black for your aunty, her mother; and so this morning I got them off, Lord be praised! and I am noo on my way to pay a visit to Miss Jenny Purdie, my cousin, at Greenock."

"Goodness! and is this to throw poor Beenie and Walky adrift?" exclaimed Walkinshaw.

"Charity, Jamie, my bairn, begins at hame, and they hae a nearer claim on Dirdumwhamle, who is Walky's lawful father, than on me: so e'en let them live upon him till I invite them back again."

Walkinshaw, though really shocked, he could not tell why, was yet so tickled by the leddy's adroitness that he laughed most immoderately, and was unable for some time in consequence to communicate the message of which he was the joyous bearer; but when he told her, she exclaimed—

"Na, if that's the turn things hae ta'en, I'll defer my visit to Miss Jenny for the present; so we'll return back. For surely, baith Beenie and Walky will no be destitute of a' consideration, when they come to their kingdom, for the dreadfu' cost and outlay that I hae been at the last five

weeks. But, if they're guilty o' sic niggerality, I'll mak out a count,—bed, board, and washing, at five-and-twenty shillings a week, Mrs Scrimpit, the minister's widow of Toomgarnels, tells me, would be a charge o' great moderation;—and if they pay't (as pay't they shall, or I'll hae them for an affront to the Clerk's Chambers), ye's get the whole half o't, Jamie, to buy yoursel' a braw Andrew Ferrara. But I marvel, wi' an exceeding great joy, at this cast o' grace that's come on your uncle. For, frae the hour he saw the light, he was o' a most voracious nature for himsel', and while the fit lasts I hope ye'll get him to do something for you."

Walkinshaw then not only told her what his uncle had done, but, with the ardour in which the free heart of youth delights to speak of favours, he recapitulated all the kind and friendly things that had been said to him.

"Jamie, Jamie, I ken your uncle Geordie better than you—for I hae been his mother. It's no for a courtesy o' causey clash that he's birlin' his mouldy pennies in sic firlots—tak my word for't."

"There is no possible advantage can arise to him from his kindness to me."

"That's to say, my bairn, that ye haena a discerning spirit to see't; but if ye had the second sight o' experience as I hae, ye would fin' a whaup in the nest, or I am no a Christian sister, bapteezed Girzel."

By this time they had returned to the house,

and the maid having unlocked the door, and carried in the trunk, Walkinshaw followed his grandmother into the parlour, with the view of enjoying what she herself called "the observes of her philosification;" but the moment she had taken her seat, instead of resuming the wonted strain of her jocular garrulity, she began to sigh deeply, and weep bitterly, a thing which he never saw her do before but in a way that seldom failed to amuse him. On this occasion, however, her emotion was unaffected, and it moved him to pity her. "What's the matter with you?" said he kindly. She did not, however, make any answer for some time, but at last she said—

"Thou's gaun awa to face thy faes—as the sang sings, 'far, far frae me and Logan braes,'—and I am an aged person, and may ne'er see thee again; and I am wae to let thee gang, for though thou was aye o' a nature that had nae right reverence for me, a deevil's buckie, my heart has aye warm't to thee mair than to a' the lave o' my grandchildren. But it's no in my power to do for thee as thy uncle has done, though it's well known to every one that kens me that I hae a most generous heart—far mair than e'er he had—and I wouldna part wi' thee without handseling thy knapsack. Hech, sirs! little did I think whan the pawkie laddie spoke o' my bit gathering wi' Robin Carrick, that it was in a sincerity; but thou's get a part. I'll no let thee gang without a solid benison. So tak the key, and gang

into the scrutoire and bring out the pocket-book."

Walkinshaw was petrified, but did as he was desired; and, having given her the pocket-book sewed by his aunt, Mrs Milrookit, at the boarding-school, she took several of Robin's promissory notes out, and looking them over, presented him with one for fifty pounds.

"Now, Jamie Walkinshaw," said she, "if ye spend ae plack o' that like a prodigal son, it's no to seek what I will say when ye come back; but I doot, I doot, lang before that day I'll be deep and dumb aneath the yird, and naither to see nor hear o' thy weal or thy woe."

So extraordinary and unlooked-for an instance of liberality on the part of his grandmother, together with the unfeigned feeling by which she was actuated, quite overwhelmed Walkinshaw, and he stood holding the bill in his hand, unable to speak. In the meantime, she was putting up her other bills; and, in turning them over, seeing one for forty-nine pounds, she said, "Jamie, forty-nine pounds is a' the same as fifty to ane that pays his debts by the roll of a drum,—so tak this, and gie me that back."

CHAPTER LXXXIV

THE time between the visit to Glasgow and the departure of Walkinshaw for Glengael was the busiest period that had occurred in the annals of Camrachle from the placing of Mr Eadie in the cure of the parish. To the young men belonging to the hamlet who had grown up with Walkinshaw, it was an era of great importance; and some of them doubted whether he ought not to have beaten up for recruits in a neighbourhood where he was known, rather than in the Highlands; but the elder personages, particularly the matrons, were thankful that the Lord was pleased to order it differently.

His mother and sister, with the assistance of Ellen Frazer, were more thriftily engaged in getting his baggage ready; and although the sprightliness of Ellen never sparkled more brilliantly for the amusement of her friends, there were moments when her bosom echoed in a low soft murmur to the sigh of anxiety that frequently burst from his mother's breast.

Mr Eadie was not the least interested in the village. He seemed as if he could not give his

pupil advice enough, and Walkinshaw thought he had never before been so tiresome. They took long walks together; and ever and anon the burden of the worthy minister's admonition was the sins and deceptions of the world, and the moral perils of a military life.

But no one—neither tutor, mother, nor amorosa—appeared so profoundly occupied with the event as Mrs Eadie, whose majestic intellect was evidently touched with the fine frenzy of a superstition at once awful and elevated. She had dreams of the most cheering augury, though all the incidents were wild and funereal; and she interpreted the voices of the birds and the chattering of the magpies in language more oriental and coherent than Macpherson's *Ossian*.

The moon had changed on the day on which Walkinshaw went into Glasgow, and she watched the appearance of its silver rim with the most mysterious solicitude. Soon after sunset on the third evening, as she was sitting on a tombstone in the churchyard with Mr Eadie, she discovered it in the most favourable aspect of the heavens, and in the very position which assured the most fortunate issues to all undertakings commenced at its change.

"So it appears," said she, "like a boat, and it is laden with the old moon—that betokens a storm."

"But when?" said her husband, with a sigh, mournfully disposed to humour the aberrations of her fancy.

"The power is not yet given to me to tell," was her solemn response. "But the sign is a witness that the winds of the skies shall perform some dreadful agency in the fortunes of all enterprises ruled by this lunar influence. Had the moon been first seen but as a portion of a broken ring, I would have veiled my face, and deplored the omen. She comes forth, however, in her brightness—a silver boat sailing the azure depths of the heavens, and bearing a rich lading of destiny to the glorious portals of the sun."

At that moment a cow looked over the churchyard wall, and lowed so close to Mr Eadie's ear that it made him start and laugh. Instead, however, of disturbing the Pythian mood of his lady, it only served to deepen it; but she said nothing, though her look intimated that she was offended by his levity.

After a pause of several minutes she rose, and moved towards the gate without accepting his proffered arm.

"I am sorry," said he, "that you are displeased with me; but, really, the bathos of that cow was quite irresistible."

"Do you think," was her mystical reply, "that an animal which, for good reasons, the wise Egyptians hardly erred in worshipping, made to us but an inarticulate noise? It was to me a prophetic salutation. On the morning before my father left Glengael to join the royal standard, I

heard the same sound. An ancient woman, my mother's nurse, and one of her own blood, told me that it was a fatal enunciation, for then the moon was in the wane; but heard, she said, when the new moon is first seen, it is the hail of a victory or a bridal."

"It is strange," replied the minister, unguardedly attempting to reason with her, "that the knowledge of these sort of occurrences should be almost exclusively confined to the inhabitants of the Highlands."

"It is strange," said she; "but no one can expound the cause. The streamers of the northern lights shine not in southern skies."

At that moment she shuddered, and grasping the minister wildly by the arm, she seemed to follow some object with her eye that was moving past them.

"What's the matter—what do you look at?" he exclaimed, with anxiety and alarm.

"I thought it was Walkinshaw's uncle," said she, with a profound and heavy sigh, as if her very spirit was respiring from a trance.

"It was nobody," replied the minister thoughtfully.

"It was his wraith," said Mrs Eadie.

The tone in which this was expressed curdled his very blood, and he was obliged to own to himself, in despite of the convictions of his understanding, that there are more things in the heavens and the earth than philosophy can yet

explain; and he repeated the quotation from Hamlet, partly to remove the impression which his levity had made.

"I am glad to hear you allow so much," rejoined Mrs Eadie; "and I think you, must admit that of late I have given you many proofs in confirmation. Did I not tell you, when the cock crowed on the roof of our friend's cottage, that we should soon hear of some cheerful change in the lot of the inmates? And next day came Walkinshaw from Glasgow with the news of the happy separation from his uncle. On the evening before I received my letter from Glengael, you may well remember the glittering star that announced it in the candle. As sure as the omens in the crowing of the cock and the shining of that star were fulfilled, will the auguries which I have noted be found the harbingers of events."

Distressing as these shadows and gleams of lunacy were to those by whom Mrs Eadie was justly beloved and venerated, to herself they afforded a high and holy delight. Her mind, during the time the passion lasted, was to others obscure and oracular. It might be compared to the moon in the misty air when she is surrounded with a halo, and her light loses its silveriness, and invests the landscape with a shroudy paleness and solemnity. But Mrs Eadie felt herself, as it were, ensphered in the region of spirits, and moving amidst marvels and mysteries sublimer than the faculties of ordinary mortals could explore.

The minister conducted his wife to the house of Walkinshaw's mother, where she went to communicate the agreeable intelligence (as she thought) of the favourable aspect of the moon, as it had appeared to her Highland astrology. But he was so distressed by the evident increase of her malady that he did not himself immediately go in. Indeed, it was impossible for him not to acknowledge, even to the most delicate suggestions of his own mind towards her, that she was daily becoming more and more fascinated by her visionary contemplations; and in consequence, after taking two or three turns in the village, he determined to advise her to go with Walkinshaw to Glengael, in the hope that the change of circumstances, and the interest that she might take once more in the scenes of her youth, would draw her mind from its wild and wonderful imaginings, and fix her attention again on objects calculated to inspire more sober, but not less affecting feelings.

CHAPTER LXXXV

THE result of Mr Eadie's reflections was a proposition to Walkinshaw to delay his journey for a day or two, until Mrs Eadie could be prepared to accompany him; but, when the subject was mentioned to her, she declared the most decided determination not to trouble the tide of his fortune by any interposition of hers, which had been full of disappointments and sorrows. From whatever sentiment this feeling arose, it was undoubtedly dictated by magnanimity,—for it implied a sense of sacrifice on her part;—nevertheless, it was arranged that although Walkinshaw should set out at the time originally fixed, Mrs Eadie, accompanied by Ellen Frazer, should follow him to Glengael as soon after as possible.

To the lovers this was no doubt delightful; but, when the Laird of Kittlestonheugh heard of it in Glasgow, it disturbed him exceedingly. The departure of Ellen Frazer from Camrachle to Glengael, where his nephew was for a time to fix his headquarters, was an occurrence that he had not contemplated, and still less, if any

degree can exist in an absolute negative, that the minister's insane wife should accompany her.

A circumstance, however, occurred at the time, which tended materially to diminish his anxieties. A number of gentlemen belonging to the royal city had projected a sea excursion in Allan M'Lean's pilot-boat, and one of the party proposed to Kittlestonheugh that he should be of their party,—for they were all friends, and sympathised, of course, with the most heartfelt commiseration, for the loss he had sustained in his wife, who had been nearly twenty years almost as much dead as alive, and particularly in the grief he suffered by the injudicious marriage of his daughter. George, with his habitual suavity, accepted the invitation; and on the self-same day that our friend and personal acquaintance Walkinshaw set off in the coach from the classical and manufacturing town (as we believe Gibbon the historian ycleped the royal city) for the *soi-disant* intellectual metropolis and modern Athens of Edinburgh, his uncle embarked at the stair of the west quay of Greenock.

What stores were laid in by those Glasgow Argonautics—what baskets of limes, what hampers of wine and rum, and loaves of sugar, and cheese and bacon hams, with a modicum of biscuit,—we must leave for some more circumstantial historian to describe. Sufficient for us, and for all acquainted with the munificent con-

sideration of the Glottiani for themselves, is the fact that seven of the primest magnates of the royal city embarked together to enjoy the sea air, and the appetite consequent thereon, in one of the best sailing and best navigated schooners at that time on the west of Scotland. Whether any of them, in the course of the voyage, suffered the affliction of sea-sickness, we have never heard; but from our own opinion, believing the thing probable, we shall not enter into any controversy on the subject. There was, to be sure, some rumour shortly after, that, off Ailsa, they did suffer from one kind of malady or another; but whether from eating of that delicious encourager of appetite, solan goose—the most savoury product of the rocky pyramid—, or from a stomachic inability to withstand the tossings of the sea, we have never received any satisfactory explanation. Be this, however, as it may, no jovial, free-hearted, good kind of men ever enjoyed themselves better than the party aboard the pilot-boat.

They traversed the picturesque Kyles of Bute —coasted the shores of Cantyre—touched at the beautiful port of Campbeltown—doubled the cliffy promontory—passed Gigha—left Islay on the left—navigated the Sound of Jura—prudently kept along the romantic coast of Lorn and Appin—sailed through the Sound of Mull—drank whisky at Rum—and, afraid of the beds and bowls of the hospitable Skye, cast anchor

in Gareloch. What more they did, and where they further navigated the iron shores and tusky rocks of the headlands that grin in unsatiated hunger upon the waves and restless waters of the Minch, we shall not here pause to describe. Let it be enough that they were courageously resolved to double Cape Wrath, and to enjoy the midnight twilights and the smuggled gin of Kirkwall; the aurora-borealis of the hyperborean region, with the fresh ling of Tammy Tomson's cobble boat at Hoy, and the silvery glimpses of Ursa Major; together with the tasty whilks and lampets that Widow Calder, o' the Foul Anchor at Stromness, assured her customers —in all her English—were pickled to a concupiscable state of excellence. Our immediate duty is to follow the steps of the laird's nephew; and without entering upon any unnecessary details (our readers, we trust, have remarked that we entertain a most commendable abhorrence of all circumstantiality), we shall allow Allan M'Lean and his passengers to go where it pleased themselves, while we return to Camrachle. Not that we have much more to say respecting what passed there than that Walkinshaw, as had been previously arranged, set out alone for Glengael Castle, in Inverness-shire; the parting from his mother and sister being considerably alleviated by the reflection that Ellen Frazer, in attendance on Mrs Eadie, was soon to follow him. Why this should have given him any particular plea-

sure, we cannot understand; but as the young man, to speak prosaically, was in love, possibly there are some juvenile persons capable of entering into his feelings. Not, however, knowing, of our own knowledge, what is meant by the phrase, we must just thus simply advert to the fact; expressing, at the same time, a most philosophical curiosity to be informed what it means, and why it is that young gentlemen and ladies, in their teens, should be more liable to the calamity than personages of greater erudition in the practices of the world.

CHAPTER LXXXVI

IN the summer of the year 1793, we have some reason to believe, the rugging and riving times of antiquity were so well over in the north of Scotland that, not only might any one of his majesty's subalterns travel there on the recruiting service, but even any spinster, not less than threescore, without let, hindrance, or molestation, to say nothing of personal violence. We shall not, therefore, attempt to seduce the tears of our fair readers with a sentimental description of the incidents which befell our friend Walkinshaw, in his journey from Camrachle to Glengael, except to mention, in a parenthetical way, that, when he alighted from the Edinburgh coach at the canny twa and twae toun of Aberdeenawa, he had some doubt if the inhabitants spoke any Christian language.

Having remained there a night and part of a day, to see the place, and to make an arrangement with the host of an hostel for a man and gig to take him to Glengael Castle, he turned his face towards the north-west, and soon entered what to him appeared a new region. Mrs Eadie had sup-

plied him with introductory letters to all her kith and kin along the line of his route, and the recommendations of the daughter of the old Glengael were billets on the hospitality and kindness of the country. They were even received as the greatest favours by those who knew her least, so cherished and so honoured was the memory of the ill-fated chieftain, among the descendants of that brave and hardy race, who suffered in the desolation of the clans at Culloden.

The appearance and the natural joyous spirits of Walkinshaw endeared him to the families at the houses where he stopped on his way to Glengael, and his journey was, in consequence, longer and happier than he expected. On the afternoon of the ninth day after leaving Aberdeen, he arrived at the entrance of the rugged valley in which the residence of Mr Frazer was situated.

During the morning he had travelled along the foot of the mountains and patches of cultivation, and here and there small knots of larches, recently planted, served to vary the prospect and enliven his journey; but, as he approached the entrance to Glengael, these marks of civilisation and improvement gradually became rarer. When he entered on the land that had been forfeited, they entirely disappeared; for the green spots that chequered the heath there, were as the graves of a race that had been rooted out or slaughtered. They consisted of the sites of

cottages which the soldiers of the Duke of Cumberland's army had plundered and burned in the year forty-five.

The reflections which these monuments of fidelity awakened in the breast of the young soldier, as the guide explained to him what they were, saddened his spirit, and the scene which opened when he entered the cliffy pass that led into Glengael darkened it more and more. It seemed to him as if he was quitting the habitable world, and passing into the realms, not merely of desolation, but of silence and herbless sterility. A few tufts of heath and fern among the rocks, in the bottom of the glen, showed that it was not absolutely the valley of death.

The appearance of the lowering steeps, that hung their loose crags over the road, was as if some elder mountains had been crushed into fragments, and the wreck thrown in torrents, to fill up that dreary, soundless, desolate solitude, where nature appeared a famished skeleton, pining amidst poverty and horror.

But, after travelling for two or three miles through this interdicted chasm, the cliffs began to recede, and on turning a lofty projecting rock, his ears were gladdened with the sound of a small torrent that was leaping in a hundred cascades down a ravine fringed with birch and hazel. From that point verdure began to reappear, and as the stream in its course was increased by other mountain rivulets, the scenery of the glen gradually

assumed a more refreshing aspect. The rocks became again shaggy with intermingled heath and brambles, and the stately crimson foxglove, in full blossom, rose so thickly along the sides of the mountains that Walkinshaw, unconscious that it was from the effect of their appearance, began to dream in his reverie of guarded passes, and bloody battles, and pickets of red-coated soldiers bivouacking on the hills.

But his attention was soon roused from these heroical imaginings by a sudden turn of the road laying open before him the glassy expanse of an extensive lake, and, on the summit of a lofty rocky peninsula, which projected far into its bosom, the walls and turrets of Glengael.

From the desolate contrast of the pass he had travelled, it seemed to him that he had never beheld a landscape so romantic and beautiful. The mountains, from the margin of the water, were green to their summits, and a few oaks and firs around the castle enriched the picturesque appearance of the little promontory on which it stood. Beyond a distant vista of the dark hills of Ross the sun had retired, but the clouds, in glorious masses of golden fires, rose in a prodigality of splendid forms, in which the military imagination of the young enthusiast had no difficulty in discovering the towers, and domes, and pinnacles of some airy Babylon, with burnished chariots on the walls, and brazen warriors in clusters on the battlements.

This poetical enchantment, however, was soon dissolved. The road along the skirt of the lake, as it approached the castle, was rugged and steep, and where it turned off into the peninsula, towards the gate, it literally lay on the cornice of a precipice, which, with all his valour, made Walkinshaw more than once inclined to leap from the gig. Here and there a fragment of an old wall showed that it had once been fenced, and where the rains had scooped hollows on the edge of the cliff, a few stakes had recently been put up; but there was an air of decay and negligence around that prepared the mind of the visitor for the ruinous aspect of the castle.

Mr Frazer, owing to his professional avocations, had seldom resided there; and he was too ambitious to raise the means to redeem the bonds he had granted for the purchase, to lay anything out in improvements. The state and appearance of the place was, in consequence, lone and dismal. Not only were the outer walls mantled with ivy, but the arch of the gateway was broken. Many of the windows in the principal edifice were rudely filled up with stones. The slates in several places had fallen from the extinguisher-less desolate roofed turrets, and patches of new lime, on different places of the habitable buildings, bore testimony to the stinted funds which the proprietor allowed for repairs.

Within the gate the scene was somewhat more alluring. The space enclosed by the walls had

been converted into a garden, which Mrs Frazer and her daughters superintended, and had ornamented with evergreens and flowers. The apartments of the family were also neatly repaired, and showed, in the midst of an evident parsimony, a degree of taste that bespoke a favourable opinion of the inhabitants, which the reception given to Walkinshaw confirmed.

Mr Frazer, an elderly gentleman of an acute and penetrating look, met him at the door, and, heartily shaking him by the hand, led him into a parlour, where Mrs Frazer, with two daughters, the sisters of Ellen, were sitting. The young ladies and their mother received him even with more frankness than the advocate. It was, indeed, not difficult to perceive that they had previously formed an agreeable opinion of him, which they were pleased to find his prepossessing appearance confirm. But after the first congratulatory greetings were over, a slight cloud was cast on the spirits of the family by his account of the health of their relation, Mrs Eadie. It, however, was not of very long duration, for the intelligence that she might be daily expected with Ellen soon chased it away.

CHAPTER LXXXVII

As Mr Eadie found he could not conveniently get away from his parish, and the health of his lady requiring that she should travel by easy stages, it was arranged, after Walkinshaw's departure, that his sister should take the spare corner of the carriage. Accordingly, on the day following his arrival at Glengael, they all made their appearance at the castle.

Mrs Eadie's malady had in the meantime undergone no change. On the contrary, she was become more constantly mystical, and the mournful feelings awakened by the sight of her early home, desolated by time and the ravages of war, rather served to increase her superstitious reveries. Every feature of the landscape recalled some ancient domestic tradition; and as often as she alluded to the ghostly stories that were blended with her ancestral tales, she expatiated in the loftiest and wildest flights of seeming inspiration and prophecy.

But still she enjoyed lucid intervals of a serene and tender melancholy. On one occasion, while she was thus walking with the young ladies in

the environs of the castle, she stopped abruptly, and, looking suddenly around, burst into tears.

"It was here," said she, "on this spot, that the blossoms of my early hopes fell, and were scattered for ever."

At that moment, a gentleman, some ten or twelve years older than Walkinshaw, dressed in the Highland garb, was seen coming towards the castle, and the majestic invalid uttered a terrific shriek, and fainted in the arms of her companions. The stranger, on hearing the scream, and seeing her fall, ran to the assistance of the ladies.

When Mrs Eadie was so far recovered as to be able to look up, the stranger happened to be standing behind Ellen, on whose lap her head was laid, and, not seeing him, she lay, for some time after the entire restoration of her faculties, in a state of profound solemnity and sorrow. "O Frazer!" she exclaimed pathetically.

"I have seen him," she added; "and my time cannot now be long."

At that instant her eye lighted on the stranger as he moved into another position. She looked at him for some time with startled amazement and awe; and, turning round to one of the young ladies, said, with an accent of indescribable grief, "I have been mistaken." She then rose, and the stranger introduced himself. He was the same person in whom, on his arrival from France, she had fourteen years before discovered the son

of her early lover. Seeing him on the spot where she had parted from his father, and dressed in the garb and tartan of the clan which her lover wore on that occasion, she had, in her visionary mood, believed he was an apparition.

Saving these occasional hallucinations, her health certainly received new energy from her native air; and, by her presence at the castle, she was of essential service to the recruiting of her young friend.

In the meantime, Glengael, being informed of the attachment between Walkinshaw and Ellen, had espoused his interests with great ardour; and French Frazer, as the stranger was called, also raising men for promotion, the castle became a scene of so much bustle as materially to disturb the shattered nerves of the invalid. With a view, therefore, to change the scene, and to enable Mrs Eadie to enjoy the benefit of sea-bathing, an excursion was proposed to Caithness and Sutherland, where Glengael was desirous of introducing the officers to certain political connections which he had in these counties; and it was proposed that, while the gentlemen went to pay their visits, the ladies should take up their residence at the little town of Wick.

The weather had, for some days before their departure from Glengael, been bright and calm, and the journey to Wick was performed with comparative ease and comfort. The party had, however, scarcely alighted at the house, which a

servant sent on before had provided for their accommodation, when the wind changed, and the skies were overcast. For three days it raged a continual tempest; the rain fell in torrents; and the gentlemen, instead of being able to proceed on their visit, were confined to the house. At the end of the third day the storm subsided, and, though the weather was broken, there were intervals which allowed them to make little excursions in the neighbourhood.

The objects they visited, and the tales and traditions of the country, were alike new and interesting to the whole party; and it was agreed that, before leaving Wick, the gentlemen should conduct the ladies to some of the remarkable spots which they had themselves visited,—among other places, Girnigo Castle, the ancient princely abode of the Earls of Caithness, the superb remains of which still obtain additional veneration, in the opinion of the people, from the many guilty and gloomy traditions that fear and fancy have exaggerated in preserving the imperfect recollections of its early history.

Mrs Eadie had agreed to accompany them, the walk not exceeding three or four miles; but on the evening preceding the day which they had fixed for the excursion, when the weather had all the appearance of being settled, she saw, or imagined that she saw, at sunset, some awful prodigy which admonished her not to go.

"I beheld," said she, "between me and the

setting sun, a shadowy hand bearing an hour-glass, run out; and when I looked again, I saw the visionary semblance of Walkinshaw's uncle pass me with a pale countenance. Twice have I witnessed the same apparition of his wraith, and I know from the sign that either his time is not to be long, or to-morrow we shall hear strange tidings."

It was useless to reason or to argue with her sublime and incomprehensible pretensions; but as it was deemed not prudent to leave her alone, Glengael and Mrs Frazer agreed to remain at Wick, while French Frazer and the young ladies, with Walkinshaw and his sister, went to inspect the ruins of Girnigo, and the rocks, caverns, and precipices of Noss-head.

Of all places in the wild and withered region of Caithness, the promontory of Noss-head presents, alike to the marine voyager and the traveller by land, one of the most tremendous objects. The waves of the universal sea have, from the earliest epochs, raged against it. Huge rocks, torn from the cliffs, stand half hid in the waters, like the teeth and racks of destruction grinning for shipwrecks. No calm of the ocean is there without a swell, and no swell without horror. The sea-birds, that love to build on the wildest cliffs and precipices of that coast of ruins, shun Noss-head, for the ocean laves against it in everlasting cataracts, and the tides, whether in ebb or flow, hurl past in devouring whirlpools.

To the pilots afar at sea it is a lofty landmark and a beacon; but the vessel embayed either within its northern or its southern cliffs may be known by the marks on her sails or the name on the pieces of her stern—but none of her crew ever escape to tell the circumstances of her fate. Even there the miserable native earns no spoils from the waves. Whatever reaches the shore consists of fragments, or splinters, or corpses, or limbs: all are but the crumbs and the surfeit-relics of destruction.

CHAPTER LXXXVIII

MR DONALD GUNN, the worthy dominie of Wick, who had agreed to act as a guide to Girnigo, was, soon after sunrise, at the door, summoning the party to make ready for the journey; for, although the morning was fair and bright, he had seen signs in the preceding evening which made him apprehensive of another storm. "The wind," said he to Walkinshaw, who was the first that obeyed the call, "often at this time of the year rises about noon, when the waves jump with such agility against the rocks that the most periculous points of view cannot be seen in their proper elegance, without the risk of breaking your neck, or at least of being washed away and drowned for ever."

Walkinshaw, accordingly, upon Gunn's report, as he called it, roused the whole party, and they set out for Staxigo, preceded by the dominie, who, at every turn of the road, "indexed," as he said, "the most interesting places."

During the walk to the village, the weather still continued propitious; but the schoolmaster observed that a slight occasional breeze from the

north-east, the wildest wind that blows on that coast, rippled the glassy sea, as it undulated among the rocks below their path,—a sure indication, so early in the morning, of a tempestuous afternoon. His companions, however, unacquainted with the omens of that ravenous shore, heard his remark without anxiety.

After breakfasting at Elspeth Heddle's public in Staxigo on milk, and ham and eggs, a partan, and haddocks, they went on to the ruins of Girnigo. The occasional fetching of the wind's breath, which the dominie had noticed in their morning walk, was now become a steady gale, and the waves began to break against the rugged cliffs and headlands to the southward, insomuch that, when the party reached the peninsula on which the princely ruins of the united castles of Girnigo and Sinclair are situated, they found several fishermen belonging to Wick, who had gone out to sea at daybreak, busily drawing their boats on shore in the little port on the south side of the cliffs, under the walls. The visitors inquired why they were so careful in such bright and summer weather; but they directed the attention of the dominie to long flakes of goat's beard in the skies, and to the sea-birds flying towards the upland.

By this time the billows were breaking white and high on the extremities of Noss-head, and the long grass on the bartizans and window-sills of the ruins streamed and hissed in the wind.

The sun was bright; but the streaks of hoary vapour that veined the pure azure of the heavens retained their position and menacing appearance. There was, however, nothing in the phenomena of the skies to occasion any apprehension; and the party, without thinking of the immediate horrors of a storm, sympathised with their guide, as he related to them the mournful legends of those solitary towers. But although he dwelt, with particular emphasis, on the story of the bishop whom one of the Earls of Caithness had ordered his vassals to boil in a caldron on account of his extortions, their sympathy was more sorrowfully awakened by the woeful fate of the young Master of Caithness, who, in 1572, fell a victim to the jealousy of his father.

"George, the earl at that time," said the schoolmaster, "with his son the Master of Caithness, was on the leet of the lovers of Euphemia, the only daughter of an ancestor of Lord Reay. The lady was young and beautiful, and naturally preferred the son to the father; but the earl was a haughty baron, and, in revenge for his son proving a more thriving wooer, was desirous of putting him for a season out of the way,—but not by the dirk, as the use and wont of that epoch of unrule might have justified. Accordingly, one afternoon, as they were sitting together in the hall at yonder architraved window in the second story, the wrathful earl clapped his hands thrice, and in came three blackaviced kerns in rusted armour, who,

by a signal harmonised between them and Earl George, seized the lawful heir, and dragged him to a dampish captivity in yon vault, of which you may see the yawning hungry throat in the chasm between the two principal lumps of the buildings."

The learned dominie then proceeded to relate the sequel of this strange story, by which it appeared that soon after the imprisonment of his son, the earl being obliged to render his attendance at the court of Stirling, left his son in the custody of Murdow Mackean Roy, who, soon after the departure of his master, was persuaded by the prisoner to connive at a plan for his escape. But the plot was discovered by William, the earl's second son, who apprehended Murdow, and executed him in the instant. Immediately after, he went down into the dungeon, and threatened his brother also with immediate punishment if he again attempted to corrupt his keepers. The indignant young nobleman, though well ironed, sprang upon Lord William, and bruised him with such violence that he soon after died. David and Inghrame Sinclair were then appointed custodiers of the prisoner; but, availing themselves of the absence of the earl, and the confusion occasioned by the death of William, they embezzled the money in the castle, and fled, leaving their young lord in the dungeon, a prey to the horrors of hunger, of which he died.

About seven years after, the earl, while he lamented the fatal consequences of his own rash

rivalry, concealed his thirst for revenge. Having heard that Inghrame Sinclair, who had retired with his booty to a distant part of the country, intended to celebrate the marriage of his daughter by a great feast, he resolved to make the festival the scene of punishment. Accordingly, with a numerous retinue, he proceeded to hunt in the neighbourhood of Inghrame Sinclair's residence; and, availing himself of the hospitable courtesies of the time, he entered the banquet-hall, and slew the traitor in the midst of his guests.

While the visitors in the lee of the ruins were listening to the dominie's legend, the wind had continued to increase and the sea to rise, and the spray of the waves was springing in stupendous water-spouts and spires of foam over all the headlands in view to the south.

"Ay," said the dominie, pointing out to them the ruins of Clyth Castle, over which the sea was breaking white in the distance, "we may expect a dry storm, for Clyth has got on its shroud. Look where it stands like a ghost on the shore! It is a haunted and unhallowed monument.

"In olden and ancient times, the laird of Clyth went over to Denmark, and, being at the court of Elsineur, counterfeited, by the help of a handsome person, and a fine elocution, the style and renown of the most prosperous gentleman in all Caithness, by which he beguiled a prince of Copenhagen to give him his daughter in marriage, a lady of rare and surpassing beauty. After his marriage he

returned to Scotland to prepare for the reception of his gorgeous bride; but, when he beheld his own rude turret amidst the spray of the ocean's sea, and thought of the golden palaces and sycamore gardens of Denmark, he was shocked at the idea of a magnificent princess inhabiting such a bleak abode, and overwhelmed with the dread of the indignation that his guilt would excite among her friends. So when the Danish man-of-war, with the lady on board, was approaching the coast, he ordered lights and fires along the cliffs of Ulbster, by which the pilots were bewildered, and the ship was dashed in pieces. The princess and her maids of honour, with many of the sailors, were drowned; but her body was found, beautiful in death, with rings on her fingers, and gems in her ears; and she was interred, as became a high-born lady of her breeding, in the vault where she now lies, among the ancestors of Sir John Sinclair of Ulbster; and ever since that time, the Castle of Clyth has been untenanted, and as often as the wind blows from the north-east, it is covered with a shroud, as if doing penance for the maiden of Denmark."

Notwithstanding the pedantry in the dominie's language in relating this tradition, the unaffected earnestness with which he expressed himself, moved the compassion of his auditors, and some of the ladies shed tears; which the gentlemen observing, Walkinshaw, to raise their spirits, proposed they should go forward towards Noss-head

to view the dreadful turbulency of the breakers. But, before they had approached within half a mile of the promontory, the violence of the gale had increased to such a degree that they found themselves several times obliged to take refuge in the hollows of the rocks, unable to withstand the fury of the wind, and the lavish showers of spray that rose in sheets from the waves, and came heavier than rain on the blast.

CHAPTER LXXXIX

In the meantime, the Glasgow party on board Allan M'Lean's pilot-boat were enjoying their sail and sosherie. Enticed by the beauty of the sunny weather, which had preceded the arrival of our Glengael friends at Wick, they had made a long stretch as far to the north as the mainland of Shetland, and after enjoying fresh ling and stockfish in the highest perfection there, and laying in a capital assortment of worsted hose for winter, they again weighed anchor, with the intention of returning by the Pentland Firth. Being, however, overtaken by the boisterous weather which obliged Mr Frazer and his two recruiting guests to stop at Wick, they went into Kirkwall Bay, where they were so long detained that the thoughts of business and bills began to deteriorate their pleasure.

To none of the party was the detention so irksome as to Mr Walkinshaw, for, independent of the cares of his mercantile concerns, his fancy was running on Ellen Frazer, and he was resolved, as soon as he returned to the Clyde, to sound her father with a proposal, to solicit her for his second

wife. Why a gentleman so well advanced in life should have thought of offering himself as a candidate for a lady's love against his nephew, we must leave to be accounted for by those who are able to unravel the principles of the Earl of Caithness's enmity to his son, particularly as we are in possession of no reasonable theory adequate to explain how he happened to prefer Ellen Frazer to the numerous beauties of the royal city. It is sufficient for us, as historians, simply to state the fact, and narrate the events to which it gave rise.

Mr Walkinshaw, then, being rendered weary of the Orkneys, and, perhaps, also of the jovialty of his companions, by the mingled reflections of business, and the tender intention of speedily taking a second wife, resolved, rather than again incur the uncertainties of the winds and waves, to leave the pilot-boat at Kirkwall, and embark for Thurso, in order to return home overland: a vessel belonging to that port being then windbound in the bay. Accordingly, on the same morning that the party from Wick went to visit Girnigo Castle, and the magnificent horrors of Noss-head, he embarked.

For some time after leaving Kirkwall, light airs and summer breezes enabled the sloop in which he had taken his passage to work pleasantly round Moulhead. But before she had passed the spiky rocks and islets of Copinshaw, the master deemed it prudent to stand further out to sea;

for the breeze had freshened, and the waves were dashing themselves into foam on Roseness and the rugged shores of Barra.

The motion of the sloop, notwithstanding the experience which the passenger had gained in the pilot-boat, overwhelmed him with unutterable sickness, and he lay on the deck in such affliction that he once rashly wished he was drowned. The cabin-boy who attended him was so horror-struck at hearing so profane a wish at sea while the wind was rising on a lee-shore that he left him to shift for himself.

For some time the master did not think it necessary to shorten sail, but only to stretch out towards the south-east; but as the sun mounted towards the meridian, the gale so continued to increase that he not only found it necessary to reef, but in the end to hand almost all his canvas save the fore-sail. Still, as there were no clouds, no rain, no thunder nor lightning, the sea-sick Glasgow merchant dreamt of no danger.

"Maybe," said the cabin-boy in passing, as the laird happened to look up from his prostrate situation on the deck, "ye'll get your ugly wish ouer soon."

The regardless manner and serious tone in which this was said had an immediate and restorative effect. Mr Walkinshaw roused himself, and looking round, was surprised to see the sails taken in, and casting his eyes to leeward, beheld, with a strong emotion of consternation, the

ocean boiling with tremendous violence and the spindrift rising like steam.

"It blows a dreadful gale?" said he inquiringly to the master.

"It does," was the emphatic reply.

"I hope there is no danger," cried the merchant, alarmed, and drawing himself close under the larboard gunnel.

The master, who was looking anxiously towards Duncansby-head, which presented a stupendous tower of foaming spray, over the starboard bow, replied—

"I hope we shall be able to weather Noss-head."

"And if we do not," said Mr Walkinshaw, "what's to be done?"

"You'll be drowned," cried the cabin-boy, who had seated himself on the lee-side of the companion; and the bitterness of the reproachful accent with which this was said stung the proud merchant to the quick. But he said nothing; his fears were, however, now all awake, and he saw, with a feeling of inexpressible alarm, that the crew were looking eagerly and sorrowfully towards the roaring precipices of Caithness.

Still the vessel kept bravely to her helm and was working slowly outward; but as she gradually wore round, her broadside became more and more exposed to the sea, and once or twice her decks were washed fore and aft.

"This is terrible work, captain," said Mr. Walkinshaw.

"It is," was all the answer he received.

"Is there no port we can bear away for?"

"None."

"Good heavens, captain! if this continues till night?"

The master eyed him for a moment, and said, with a shudder,—

"If it does, sir, we shall never see night."

"You'll be drowned," added the little boy, casting an angry look from behind the companion.

"Almighty Powers! — surely we are not in such danger?" exclaimed the terrified merchant.

"Hold your tongue," again cried the boy.

Mr Walkinshaw heard him, and for a moment was petrified, for the command was not given with insolence, but solemnity.

A cry of "Hold fast" in the same instant came from the forecastle, and after a momentary pause a dreadful sea broke aboard and swept the deck. The master, who had himself taken the helm, was washed overboard and the tiller was broken.

"We are gone!" said the little boy as he shook the water from his jacket and crawled on towards the mast, at the foot of which he seated himself; for the loss of the tiller and the damage the rudder had sustained rendered the vessel unmanageable, and she drifted to her fate before the wind.

"Is there indeed no hope?" cried Mr Walkin-

shaw to one of the sailors, who was holding by the shrouds.

"If we get into Sinclair's Bay, there is a sandy beach," replied the sailor.

"And if we do not!" exclaimed the passenger in the accent of despair.

"We'll a' be drowned," replied the boy, with a scowling glance, as he sat cowering with his head between his knees at the foot of the mast.

"We shall not get into Sinclair's Bay," said the sailor firmly; "but we may pass Noss-head."

"Do you think so?" said Mr Walkinshaw, catching something like hope and fortitude from the sedate courage of the sailor.

Another cry of "Hold fast" prepared him for a second breach of the sea, and he threw himself on the deck and took hold of a ring-bolt, in which situation he continued though the vessel rose to the wave. In the meantime the resolute sailor, after looking calmly and collectedly around for some time, went from the larboard to the starboard and mounted several rattlings of the shrouds, against which he leant with his back, while the vessel was fast driving towards Noss-head.

CHAPTER XC

THE party from Glengael, who had, as we have described, been obliged to take refuge from the wind in the lee of the rocks, stood contemplating the scene in silence. The sky was without a cloud; but the atmosphere was nevertheless almost like steam, through which the sun shone so sickly that, even without hearing the hiss of the wind or the rage of the ocean, no shelter could have prevented the spectator from being sensible that some extraordinary violence agitated and troubled the whole air. Every shrub and bramble not only bent before the wind, but it may be said their branches literally streamed in the blast. There was a torrent which ran towards the sea near the spot where the party stood; but the wind caught its waters as they fell in a cataract, and blew them over the face of the hill like a wreath of mist. A few birch-trees that skirted the dell through which this stream ran brushed the ground before the breeze, and the silver lining of their leaves was so upturned in the constant current of the storm that they had the appearance of being covered with hoar-

frost. Not a bee was abroad on the heath, and the sea-birds were fluttering and cowering in the lee of the rocks. A bernacle that attempted to fly from behind a block of granite was whirled screaming away in the wind, and flung with such resistless impetuosity against the precipice, behind a corner of which the party were sheltering, that it was killed on the spot. The landscape was bright in the hazy sunshine; but the sheep lay in the hollows of the ground, unable to withstand the deluge of the dry tempest that swept all before it, and a wild and lonely lifelessness reigned on the mountains.

The appearance of the sea was awful. It was not because the waves rolled in more tremendous volumes than any of the party had ever before seen, and burst against the iron precipices of Noss-head with the roar and the rage of the Falls of Niagara. The whole expanse of the ocean was enveloped with spindrift, and as it occasionally opened a vessel was seen. At first it was thought she was steering for the bay of Wick, but it soon appeared that she drifted at random towards Sinclair's Bay, and could by nothing less than some miraculous change of the wind reach the anchorage opposite to Kiess Castle.

Ellen Frazer was the first who spoke of the sloop's inevitable fate. "It is dreadful," said she, "for us to stand in safety here, like spectators at a tragedy, and see yon unfortunate bark

rushing without hope to déstruction. Let us make an attempt to reach the beach; she may be driven on the shore, and we may have it in our power to assist the poor wretches, if any should escape."

They accordingly endeavoured to reach the strand; but before they could wrestle with the wind half-way towards it, they saw that the vessel could not attain Sinclair's Bay, and that her only chance of salvation was in weathering Noss-head, to which she was fast nearing. They, in consequence, changed their course, and went towards the promontory; but by the time they had gained the height they saw it was hopeless to think they could render any assistance, and they halted under the ledge of an overhanging rock, to see if she would be able to weather that dreadful headland.

The place where they took shelter was to the windward of the spray, which rose like a furious cataract against the promontory, and in pyramids of foam, that were seen many leagues off at sea, deluged the land to a great extent far beyond Castle Girnigo. It happened that Ellen Frazer had a small telescope in her hand, which they had brought with them, and when they were under cover she applied it to her eye.

"The sailors," said she, "seem to have abandoned themselves to despair. I see two prostrate on the deck. There is one standing on the shrouds as if he hopes to be able to leap on

the rocks when she strikes. The dog is on the end of the bowsprit — I can look at them no more."

She then handed the telescope to Mary, and retiring to a little distance, seated herself on a stone, and covering her face with her handkerchief, could no longer control her tears. The vessel in the meantime was fast drifting towards the rocks with her broadside to the wave.

"I think," said Mary, "that she must have lost her helm; nobody is near where it should be. They have no hope. One of the men, who had thrown himself on the deck, is risen. He is tying himself to the shrouds. There is a boy at the foot of the mast sitting cowering on the deck, holding his head between his hands."

Walkinshaw, without speaking, took the telescope from his sister, who went and sat down in silence beside Ellen. By this time the vessel had drifted so near that everything on her deck was distinct to the naked eye.

"The person on the deck," said Walkinshaw, after looking through the glass about the space of a minute, "is not a sailor; he has long clothes, and has the appearance of a gentleman, probably a passenger. That poor little boy!—he is evidently covering his ears, as if he could shut out the noise of the roaring death that awaits him. What a brave and noble fellow that is on the shrouds! If coolness and courage can save, he is safe."

At this moment a shriek from Mary roused Ellen, and they both ran to the spot where Walkinshaw was standing. A tremendous wave had covered the vessel, as it were, with a winding-sheet of foam, and before it cleared away she was among the breakers that raged against the headland.

"She is gone!" said Walkinshaw, and he took his sister and Ellen by the hands. "Let us leave these horrors." But the ladies trembled so much that they were unable to walk; and Ellen became so faint that she was obliged to sit down on the ground, while her lover ran with his hat to find, if possible, a little fresh water to revive her. He had not, however, been absent many minutes, when another shriek from his sister called him back, and on returning he found that a large dog, dripping wet, and whimpering and moaning, had laid himself at the feet of the ladies with a look of the most piteous and helpless expression. It was the dog they had seen on the bowsprit of the vessel, and they had no doubt her fate was consummated; but three successive enormous billows coming, with all the force of the German Ocean, from the Baltic, rolled into the bay. The roar with which they broke as they hurled by the cliff where the party were standing drew the attention of Walkinshaw even from Ellen; and, to his surprise, he saw that the waves had, in their sweep, drawn the vessel into the bay, and that she was coming driving along the side of the

precipice, and, if not dashed in pieces before, would pass within a few yards of where they stood. Her bowsprit was carried away, which showed how narrowly she had already escaped destruction.

The ladies, roused again into eager and anxious sympathy by this new incident, approached with Walkinshaw as near as possible to the brink of the cliff—to the very edge of which the raging waters raised their foamy crests as they passed in their might and majesty from the headland into the bay. Another awful wave was soon after seen rising at a distance, and as it came rolling onward nearer and nearer, it swallowed up every lesser billow. When it approached the vessel it swept her along so closely to the rocks that Walkinshaw shouted unconsciously, and the dog ran barking to the edge of the precipice. All on board were for a moment animated with fresh energy: the little boy stood erect; and the sailor on the shrouds, seeing Walkinshaw and the ladies, cried bravely, as the vessel rose on the swell in passing, "It will not do yet." But the attention of his admiring spectators was suddenly drawn from him to the gentleman. "Good heavens!" exclaimed Ellen Frazer, "it is your uncle!"

It was even so. Mr Walkinshaw, on raising his head to look up, saw and recognised them, and wildly starting from the deck, shook his uplifted hands with a hideous and terrific frenzy.

This scene was, however, but for an instant; the flank of the wave, as it bore the vessel along, broke against a projecting rock, and she was wheeled away by the revulsion to a great distance.

The sailor in the shrouds still stood firm. A second wave, more appalling than the former, brought the vessel again towards the cliff. The dog, anticipating what would happen, ran towards the spot where she was likely to strike. The surge swung her almost to the top of the precipice; the sailor leapt from the shrouds and caught hold of a projecting rock; the dog seized him by the jacket to assist him up, but the ravenous sea was not to lose its prey. In the same moment the wave broke, and the vessel was again tossed away from the rock, and a frightful dash of the breakers tore down the sailor and the faithful dog. Another tremendous revulsion, almost in the same moment, terminated the fate of the vessel. As it came roaring along it caught her by the broadside and dashed her into ten thousand shivers against an angle of the promontory, scarcely more than two hundred yards from the spot where the horror-struck spectators stood. Had she been made of glass her destruction and fragments could not have been greater. They floated like chaff on the waters; and for the space of four or five seconds the foam amidst which they weltered was coloured in several places with blood.

CHAPTER XCI

THE same gale which proved so fatal on the coast of Caithness carried the Glasgow party briskly home.

Before their arrival the news of the loss of Mr Walkinshaw had reached the city, and Dirdum-whamle and his son were as busy as heirs and executors could well be in taking possession of his fortune, which, besides the estate of Kittle-stonheugh, greatly exceeded their most sanguine expectations. They were, however, smitten with no little concern when, on applying to Mr Pit-winnoch, the lawyer, to receive infeftment of the lands, they heard from him, after he had perused the deed of entail, that Robina had no right to the inheritance, but that our friend Walkinshaw was the lawful heir.

It was, however, agreed, as the world, as well as themselves, had uniformly understood and believed that old Grippy had disinherited his eldest son, to say nothing about this important discovery. Walky and Robina accordingly took possession in due form of her father's mansion. Their succession was unquestioned, and they mourned in all the most fashionable pomp of woe

for the loss they had sustained, receiving the congratulatory condolence of their friends with the most befitting decorum. To do the lady justice, however, the tears which she shed were immediate from the heart; for, with all his hereditary propensity to gather and hold, her father had many respectable domestic virtues, and was accounted by the world a fair and honourable man. It is also due to her likewise to mention that she was not informed, either by her husband or father-in-law, of the mistake they had been all in with regard to the entail; so that, whatever blame did attach to them for the part they played, she was innocent of the fraud.

To Walkinshaw's mother the loss of her brother-in-law was a severe misfortune, for with him perished her annuity of fifty pounds a year. She entertained, however, a hope that Robina would still continue it; but the feelings arising from the consciousness of an unjust possession of the estate operated on the mind of Milrookit in such a way as to make him suddenly become wholly under the influence of avarice. Every necessary expense was grudged: his wife, notwithstanding the wealth she had brought him, was not allowed to enjoy a guinea; in a word, from the day in which Pitwinnoch informed him that she had no right to the property he was devoured, in the most singular manner, with the most miserly passions and fears.

The old leddy, for some time after the shock she

had met with in the sudden death of her son, mourned with more unaffected sorrow than might have been expected from her character; and having, during that period, invited Mrs Charles to spend a few weeks with her, the loss of the annuity, and conjectures respecting the continuance of it, frequently formed the subject of their conversation.

"It's my notion," the leddy would say, "that Beenie will see to a continuality o' the 'nuity; but Walky's sic a Nabal that nae doot it maun be a task o' dexterity on her side to get him to agree. Howsever, when they're a' settled, I'll no be mealy-mouthed wi' them. My word! A bein bargain he has gotten wi' her, and I'm wae to think it didna' fa' to your Jamie's luck, who is a laddie o' a winsome temper—just as like his grandfather, my friend that was, as a kittlen's like a cat, the only difference being a wee thought mair o' daffing and playrifety."

Nor was it long after these observations that the leddy had an opportunity of speaking to her grandchildren on the subject. One day soon after, when they happened to call, she took occasion to remind them how kind she had been at the time of their marriage, and also that, but for her agency, it might never have taken place.

"Noo," said she, "there is ae thing I would speak to you anent, though I was in the hope ye would hae spar't me the obligation, by making me a reasonable gratis gift for the cost and outlay

I was at, forbye trouble, on' your account. But the compliment is like the chariot-wheels o' Pharaoh,—sae dreigh o' drawing that I canna afford to be blate wi' you ony langer. Howsever, Walky and Beenie, I hae a projection in my head, the whilk is a thought o' wisdom for you to consider, and it's o' the nature o' a solemn league and covenant: If ye'll consent to allow Bell Fatherlans her 'nuity of fifty pounds per annus, as it is called according to law, I'll score ye out o' my books for the bed, board, and washing due to me, and a heavy soom it is."

"Where do you think we are to get fifty pounds a year?" exclaimed Milrookit. "Fifty pounds a year!"

"Just in the same neuk, Walky, where ye found the Kittlestonheugh estate and the three-and-twenty thousand pounds o' lying siller, Beenie's braw tocher," replied the leddy; "and I think ye're a very crunkly character, though your name's no Habakkuk, to gie me sic a constipation o' an answer."

"I can assure you, leddy," said he, "if it was a thing within the compass of my power, I wouldna need to be told to be liberal to Mrs Charles; but the burden o' a family's coming upon us, and it's necessary, nay, it's a duty, to consider that charity begins at hame."

"And what's to become o' her and her dochter? Gude guide us! Would the hard nigger let her gang on the session?—for I canna help her."

"All I can say at present," was his reply, "is that we are in no circumstances to spare anything like fifty pounds a year."

"Then I can tell thee, Walky, I will this very day mak' out my 'count, and every farthing I can extortionate frae thee, meeserable penure pig that thou art, shall be pay't ouer to her to the last fraction, just to wring thy heart o' niggerality."

"If you have any lawful claim against me, of course I am obliged to pay you."

"If I hae ony lawful claim?—ye Goliath o' cheatrie—if I hae ony lawful claim? But I'll say nothing. I'll mak' out an account—and there's nae law in Christendom to stop me for charging what I like—my goose shall lay gouden eggs, if the life bide in my bodie. Ye unicorn of oppression, to speak to me o' law, that was so kind to you; but law ye shall get, and law ye shall hae, and be made as lawful as it's possible for caption and horning, wi' clerk and signet to implement."

"If you will make your little favours a debt, nobody can prevent you; but I will pay no more than is justly due."

The leddy made no reply, but her eyes looked unutterable things; and after sitting for some time in that energetic posture of displeasure, she turned round to Robina and said, with an accent of the most touching sympathy,—

"Hech, Beenie! poor lassie! but thou hast ta'en thy sheep to a silly market. A skelp-the-

dub creature to upbraid me wi' his justly dues! But crocodile, or croakin'-deil, as I should ca' him, he'll get his ain justly dues. Mr Milrookit o' Kittlestonheugh, (as it's no the fashion when folk hae recourse to the civil war o' a law-plea to stand on a ceremony), maybe ye'll find some mair pleasant place than this room, an' ye were to tak' the pains to gang to the outside o' my door; and I'll send, through the instrumentality o' a man o' business, twa lines anent that bit sma' matter for bed, board, and washing, due to me for and frae that time when, ye ken, Mr Milrookit, ye hadna ae stiver to keep yourself and your wife frae starvation. So out o' my house, and daur no longer to pollute my presence, ye partan-handit, grip-and-haud smiddy-vice Mammon o' unrighteousness."

After this gentle hint (as the leddy afterwards called it), Milrookit and Robina hastily obeyed her commands, and returned to their carriage; but before driving home he thought it necessary, under the menace he had received, to take the advice of his lawyer, Mr Pitwinnoch. Some trifling affairs, however, prevented him from driving immediately to his office, and the consequence was that the leddy, who never allowed the grass to grow in her path, was there before him.

CHAPTER XCII

MR PITWINNOCH," said the leddy, on being shown into what she called "the bottomless pit o' his consulting-room," where he wrote alone, "ye'll be surprised to see me; and, troth, ye may think it's no sma' instancy that has brought me sae far afield the day, for I hae been sic a lamiter with the rheumateese that, for a' the last week, I was little better than a nymph o' anguish: my banes were as sair as if I had been brayed in a mortar and shot into Spain. But ye maun know and understand that I hae a notion to try my luck and fortune in the rowley-powley o' a law-plea."

"Indeed!" said the lawyer. "What has happened?"

"Ay! Mr Pitwinnoch, ye may weel speer; but my twa ungrateful grandchildren, that I did sae muckle for at their marriage, hae used me waur than I were a Papistical Jew o' Jericho. I just, in my civil and discreet manner, was gie'n them a delicate *memento mori* concerning their unsettled 'count for bed, board, and washing, when up got Milrookit, as if he would hae flown

out at the broadside o' the house, and threepit that he didna owe me the tenth part o' half a farthing, and threatened to tak' me afore the Lords for a Canaanitish woman and an extortioner. Noo, don't you think that's a nice point, as my worthy father used to say, and music to the ears of a' the Fifteen at Embrough?"

"Mr Milrookit, surely," said the lawyer, "can never resist so just a demand. How much is it?"

"But, first and forwards," replied the leddy, "before we come to the condescendence, I should state the case; and, Mr Pitwinnoch, ye maun understand that I hae some knowledge o' what pertains to law, for my father was most extraordinar' at it. So I need not tell you that it's weel for me the day to know what I know. For Milrookit, as I was saying, having refused point-blank, Mr Pitwinnoch, to implement the 'nuity of fifty pounds per annus, that your client—(that's a legal word, Mr Pitwinnoch)—that your client settled on my gude-dochter, I told him he would —then and there refusing—be bound over to pay me for the bed, board, and washing. And what would you think, Mr Pitwinnoch? He responded with a 'justly due'; but I'll due him; and though, had he been calm and well-bred, I might have put up with ten pounds, yet, seeing what a ramping lion he made himsel', I'll no faik a farthing o' a thousand, which, at merchants' interest, will enable me to pay the 'nuity. So, when we get it,

ye'll hae to find me somebody willing to borrow on an heritable bond."

"I think you can hardly expect so much as a thousand pounds. If I recollect rightly, Mr and Mrs Milrookit stayed but six weeks with you," said the lawyer.

"Time," replied the leddy, "ye ken, as I hae often heard my father say, was no item in law; and unless there's a statute of vagrancy in the Decisions or the Raging Magistratom, there can be no doot that I hae't in my power to put what value I please on my house, servitude, and expense, which is the strong ground of the case. Therefore, you will write a letter forthwith to Mr Milrookit of Kittlestonheugh, charging him with a lawful debt, and a' justly due to me, of one thousand pounds, without condescending on particulars at present, as the damages can be afterwards assessed when we hae gotten payment of the principal, which everybody must allow is a most liberal offer on my part."

It was with some difficulty that Mr Pitwinnoch could preserve himself in a proper state of solemnity to listen to the instructions of his client; but what lawyer would laugh, even in his own "bottomless pit"? However, he said—

"Undoubtedly, Mrs Walkinshaw, you have a good ground of action; but perhaps I may be able to effect an amicable arrangement, if you would submit the business to arbitration."

"Arbitration, Mr Pitwinnoch!" exclaimed the

leddy. "Never propound such a thing to me; for often hae I heard my father say that arbitration was the greatest cut-throat of legal proceedings that had been devised since the discovery of justice at Amalphi. Na, na; I hae mair sense than to verdict my case wi' any sic pannelling as arbitration. So, law being my only remeid, I hope ye'll leave no stone unturned till you hae brought Mr Milrookit's nose to the grindstone; and to help you to haud it there, I hae brought a five-pound note as handsel for good luck—this being the first traffic in legalities that I hae had on my own bottom; for, in the concos mentos o' Watty, my son, ye ken I was keepit back in order to be brought forward as a witness; but there is no need o' ony decreet o' Court for such an interlocutor on the present occasion."

The leddy having, in this clear and learned manner, delivered her instructions, she left the office, and soon after Milrookit was also shown into "the bottomless pit," where he gave an account of the transaction, somewhat different, but, perhaps, no nearer the truth. He was, however, not a little surprised to find the pursuer had been there before him, and that she had instructed proceedings. But what struck him with the greatest consternation was a suggestion from Mr Pitwinnoch to compromise the matter.

"Take my advice, Mr Milrookit," said he, "and settle this quietly. There is no saying what a lawsuit may lead to; and, considering the circum-

stances under which you hold the estate, don't stir, lest the sleeping dog awake. Let us pacify the old leddy with two or three hundred pounds."

"Two or three hundred pounds for six weeks of starvation! The thing, Mr Pitwinnoch, is ridiculous."

"True, sir," replied the lawyer; "but then the state of the Entail—you should consider that. Be thankful if she will take a couple of hundreds."

"Nay, if you counsel me to do that, I have no alternative, and must submit."

"You will do wisely in at once agreeing," said Pitwinnoch; and, after some further conversation to the same effect, Milrookit gave a cheque for two hundred pounds, and retired grumbling.

The lawyer, rejoicing in so speedy and fortunate a settlement, as soon as he left the office went to the leddy, exulting in his address.

"Twa hundred pounds!" said she—"but the fifth part o' my thousand! I'll ne'er tak' ony sic payment. Ye'll carry it back to Mr Milrookit, and tell him I'll no faik a plack o' my just debt; and what's mair, if he doesna pay me the whole tot down at once, he shall be put to the horn without a moment's delay."

"I assure you," replied the lawyer, "that this is a result far beyond hope. You ought not for a moment to make a word about it; for you must be quite aware that he owes you no such sum as this. You said yourself that ten pounds would have satisfied you."

"And so it would—but that was before I gaed to law wi' him," cried the leddy; "but seeing now how I hae the rights o' the plea, I'll hae my thousand pounds if the hide be on his snout. Whatna better proof could ye hae o' the justice o' my demand than that he should hae come down in terror at once wi' two hundred pounds? I hae known my father law for seven years, and even when he won, he had money to pay out of his own pocket; so, wi' sic erles o' victory as ye hae gotten, I would be waur than mad no to stand out. Just gang till him, and comena back to me without the thousand pound—every farthing, Mr Pitwinnoch—and your own costs besides; or, if ye dinna, maybe I'll get another man o' business that will do my turn better; for in an extremity like a lawsuit folk maunna stand on friendships. Had Mr Keelevin been noo to the fore, I wouldna needed to be put to my peremptors; but, honest man, he's gone. Howsever, there's one Thomas Whitteret, that was his clerk when my friend that's awa' made his deed o' settlement; and I hae heard he has a nerve o' ability. So, if ye bringna me the thousand pounds this very afternoon, I'll apply to him to be my agent."

Mr Pitwinnoch said not a word to this, but left the house, and running to the Black Bull Inn, ordered a post-chaise, and was at Kittlestonheugh almost as soon as his client. A short conversation settled the business. The very

name of Thomas Whitteret, an old clerk of Keelevin, and probably acquainted with the whole affair, was worth five thousand pounds, and in consequence, in much less time than the leddy expected, she did receive full payment of her thousand pounds; but, instead of expressing any pleasure at her success, she regretted that she should have made a charge of such moderation, being persuaded that, had she stood out, the law would have given her double the money.

CHAPTER XCIII

MR PITWINNOCH was instructed to lay out the money at five per cent. interest to pay Mrs Charles the annuity; and one of his clerks mentioned the circumstance to a companion in Mr Whitteret's office. This led to an application from him for the loan, on account of a country gentleman in the neighbourhood, who, having obtained a considerable increase of his rental, was intending to enlarge his mansion and extend his style of living: a very common thing at that period, the effects of which are beginning to show themselves—but, as the lady said on another occasion, that's none of our concern at present.

The security offered being unexceptionable, an arrangement was speedily concluded, and an heritable bond for the amount prepared. As the party borrowing the money lived at some distance from the town, Mr Whitteret sent one of his young men to get it signed, and to deliver it to the leddy. It happened that the youth employed in this business was a little acquainted with the leddy, and knowing her whimsical humour, when he carried it home he stopped,

and fell into conversation with her about Walkinshaw, whom he knew.

"I maun gaur his mother write to him," said the leddy, "to tell him what a victory I hae gotten;—for ye maun ken, Willy Keckle, that I hae overcome principalities and powers in this controversy. Wha ever heard o' thousands o' pounds gotten for sax weeks' bed, board, and washing like mine? But it was a righteous judgment on the Nabal, Milrookit, whom I'll never speak to again in this world, and no in the next either, I doot, unless he mends his manners. He made an absolute refuse to gie a continuality o' Jamie's mother's 'nuity, which was the because o' my going to law with him for a thousand pounds, value received in bed, board, and washing for six weeks. And the case, Willy —you that's breeding for a limb o' the law—ye should ken, was sic an absolute fact that he was obligated by a judicature to pay me down the money."

Willy Keckle was so amused with her account of the speedy justice which she had obtained, as she said, by instructing Mr Pitwinnoch herself of the "nice point" and "the strong ground," that he could not refrain from relating the conversation to his master.

Mr Whitteret was diverted with the story; but it seemed so strange and unaccountable, that the amount of the demand, and the readiness with which it was paid, dwelt on his mind as ex-

traordinary circumstances; and, having occasion next day to go into Edinburgh, where Mr Frazer had returned from Glengael to attend his professional duties, he happened to be invited to dine with a party where that gentleman was, and the company consisting chiefly of lawyers—as dinner-parties unfortunately are in the Modern Athens—he amused them with the story of the leddy's legal knowledge.

Glengael, from the interest which he took in his young friend Walkinshaw, whom he had left at the castle, was led to inquire somewhat particularly into the history of the Kittlestonheugh family, expressing his surprise and suspicion, in common with the rest of the company, as to the motives which could have influenced a person of Milrookit's character to comply so readily with a demand so preposterous.

One thing led on to another, and Mr Whitteret recollected something of the deed which had been prepared when he was in Mr Keelevin's office, and how old Grippy died before it was executed. The object of this deed was then discussed, and the idea presenting itself to the mind of Glengael that possibly it might have some connection with the entail, he inquired more particularly respecting the terms of that very extraordinary settlement, expressing his astonishment that it should not have contained a clause to oblige the person marrying the heiress to take the name of Walkinshaw, to which the

old man, by all accounts, had been so much attached. The whole affair, the more it was considered, seemed the more mysterious; and the conclusion in the penetrating mind of Mr Frazer was that Milrookit had undoubtedly some strong reason for so quietly hushing the old leddy's claim.

His opinion at the moment was that Robina's father had left a will making some liberal provision for his sister-in-law's family; and that Milrookit was anxious to stand on such terms with his connections as would prevent any of them, now that Walkinshaw had left Glasgow, from inquiring too anxiously into the state of his father-in-law's affairs. But, without expressing what was passing in his mind, he so managed the conversation as to draw out the several opinions of his legal brethren. Some of them coincided with his own. There was, however, one old pawkie and shrewd Writer to the Signet present who remained silent, but whom Mr Frazer observed attending with an uncommon degree of earnest and eager watchfulness to what was said, —practising, in fact, nearly the same sort of policy which prompted himself to lead the conversation.

Mr Pilledge—for so this W.S. was called—had acquired a considerable fortune and reputation in the Parliament House by the address with which he discovered dormant rights and legal heirs; and Mr Frazer had no doubt, from the evident interest which he had taken in the Kittlestonheugh story,

that he would soon take some steps to ascertain the real motives which had led Milrookit to act in the leddy's case so inconsistently with his general character. In so far he was, therefore, not displeased to observe his earnestness; but he had often heard it said that Mr Pilledge was in the practice of making bargains with those clients whose dormant rights he undertook to establish, by which it was insinuated that he had chiefly built up his fortune — his general practice being very limited—and Mr Frazer resolved to watch his movements, in order to protect his young friend.

This opinion of Pilledge was not unfounded; for the same evening, after the party broke up, he accompanied Whitteret to the hotel where he stayed, and in the course of the walk renewed the conversation respecting the singular entail of old Grippy. The Glasgow lawyer was shrewd enough to perceive that such unusual interest in a case where he had no concern could not be dictated by the mere wonder and curiosity which the Writer to the Signet affected to express; but being unacquainted with the general character of Pilledge, he ascribed his questions and conjectures to the effect of professional feelings perplexed by a remarkable case.

But it happened next morning that he had occasion to attend a consultation with Mr Frazer, who, taking an opportunity to revert to the subject, which had so occupied their attention

on the preceding afternoon, gave him a hint to be on his guard with respect to Pilledge, suggesting, on Walkinshaw's account, that Whitteret might find it of advantage to himself could he really ascertain the secret reasons and motives by which the possessor of the Kittlestonheugh estate was actuated.

"It would not give you much trouble," said he, "were you to step into the Register Office and look at the terms of the original deed of entail; for, although the disinheritance of the eldest son, as I have always understood, was final, there may be some flaw in the succession with respect to the daughter."

This extra-judicial advice was not lost. As soon as the consultation was over Whitteret went to the Register Office, where, not a little to his surprise, he found Pilledge, as Frazer had suspected, already in the act of reading the registered deed of the entail. A short conversation then ensued, in which Whitteret intimated that he had also come for the same purpose.

"Then," said Pilledge, "let us go together, for it appears to me that the heirs-female of the sons do not succeed before the heirs whatsoever of the daughters; and Milrookit's right would be preferable to that of his wife, if the eldest son has not left a son."

"But the eldest son has left a son," replied Whitteret.

"In that case," said Pilledge, "we may make

a good thing of it with him. ' I'll propose to him to undertake his claim upon an agreement for half the rent in the event of success, and we can divide the bakes."

"You may save yourself the trouble," replied Whitteret coolly; "for I shall write to him by the first post. In the meantime Mr Frazer has authorised me to act."

"Frazer! How can he authorise you?" said Pilledge discontentedly.

"He knows that best himself; but the right of the son of the oldest son is so clear that there will be no room for any proceedings."

"You are mistaken there," replied Pilledge eagerly. "I never saw a deed yet that I could not drive a horse and cart through, and I should think that Milrookit is not such a fool as to part with the estate without a struggle. But, since you are agent for the heir of entail, I will offer to conduct the respondent's case. I think you said he is rich, independent of the heritable subject."

This conscientious conversation was abruptly terminated on the part of Whitteret, who immediately went to Mr Frazer and communicated the important discovery which had been made with respect to Walkinshaw being the heir of entail. He also mentioned something of what had passed with Mr Pilledge, expressing his apprehensions, from what he knew of Pitwinnoch, Milrookit's man of business in Glasgow, that

Pilledge, with his assistance, might involve the heir in expensive litigation.

Mr Frazer knew enough of the metaphysical ingenuity of the Parliament House to be aware that, however clear and evident any right might be, it was never beyond the possibility of dispute there, and he immediately suggested that some steps should be taken to induce Milrookit at once to resign the possession of the property. But while they were thus speaking Pilledge was already on the road to Glasgow, to apprise Milrookit of what was impending, and to counsel him to resist.

CHAPTER XCIV

FROM the circumstance of Milrookit and Robina staying with the leddy at the time of their marriage, the porter at the inn where Pilledge alighted on his arrival at Glasgow supposed they lived in her house, and conducted him there. But on reaching the door, seeing the name of Mrs Walkinshaw on a brass plate, (not quite so large as the one that the Lord Provost of the royal city sported on the occasion of his Majesty's most gracious visit to the lawful and intellectual metropolis of his ancient kingdom), he resolved to address himself to her,—for what purpose it would not be easy to say, further than he thought, perhaps, from what he had heard of her character, that she might be of use in the projected litigation. Accordingly he applied his hand to the knocker, and was shown into the room where she was sitting alone, spinning.

"You are the lady," said he, "I presume, of the late much respected Mr Claud Walkinshaw, commonly styled of Grippy."

"So they say, for want o' a better," replied the leddy, stopping at the same time her wheel and

looking up to him; "but wha are ye, and what's your will?"

"My name is Pilledge. I am a writer to the signet, and I have come to see Mr Milrookit of Kittlestonheugh respecting an important piece of business;" and he seated himself unbidden. As he said this the leddy pricked up her ears; for, exulting in her own knowledge of the law, by which she had recently so triumphed, as she thought, she became eager to know what the important piece of business could be, and replied—

"Nae doot it's anent the law-plea he has been brought into on account of his property."

Milrookit had been engaged in no suit whatever, but this was the way she took to trot out the Edinburgh writer; and she added—

"How do ye think it'll gang wi' him? Is there ony prospect o' the Lord Ordinary coming to a decision on the pursuer's petition?"

This really looked so like the language of the Parliament House, considering it came from an old lady, that Pilledge was taken in, and his thoughts running on the entail, he immediately fancied that she alluded to something connected with it, and said—

"I should think, madam, that your evidence would be of the utmost importance to the case, and it was to advise with him chiefly as to the line of defence he ought to take that I came from Edinburgh."

"Nae doot, sir, I could gie an evidence and instruct on the merits of the interdict," said she learnedly; "but I ne'er hae yet been able to come to a right understanding anent and concerning the different aforesaids set forth in the respondent's reclaiming petition. Noo, I would be greatly obligated if ye would expone to me the nice point, that I may be able to discern accordingly."

The writer to the signet had never heard a clearer argument, either at the Bar or on the Bench, and he replied—

"Indeed, mem, it lies in a very small compass. It appears that the heir-male of your eldest son is the rightful heir of entail; but there are so many difficulties in the terms of the settlement that I should not be surprised were the Court to set the deed aside,—in which case Mrs Milrookit would still retain the estate, as heir-at-law of her father."

We must allow the reader to conceive with what feelings the leddy heard this; but, new and wonderful as it was felt to be, she still preserved her juridical gravity, and said—

"It's vera true what ye say, sir, that the heir-male of my eldest son—is a son. I can easily understand that point o' law. But can ye tell me how the heir-at-law of her father, Mrs Milrookit that is, came to be a dochter, when it was aye the intent and purpose o' my friend that's awa, the testator, to make no provision but for

heirs-male, which his heart, poor man, was overly set on. Howsever, I suppose that's to be considered in the precognition."

"Certainly, mem," replied the writer to the signet; "nothing is more clear than that your husband intended the estate to go, in the first instance, to the heirs-male of his sons: first to those of Walter, the second son; and, failing them, to those of George, the third son; and, failing them, then to go back to the heirs-male of Charles, the eldest son; and, failing them, to the heirs-general of Margaret, your daughter. It is, therefore, perfectly clear that Mrs Milrookit being, as you justly observe, a daughter, the estate, according to the terms of the settlement, passes her, and goes to the heir of entail, who is the son of your eldest son."

"I understand that weel," said the leddy; "it's as plain as a pike-staff that my oe Jamie, the soldier-officer, is by right the heir; and I dinna see how Walky Milrookit, or his wife Beenie, that is, according to law, Robina, can, by any decreet o' Court, keep him out of his ain—poor laddie!"

"It is very natural for you, mem, to say so; but the case has other points, and especially as the heir of entail is in the army, I certainly would not advise Mr Milrookit to surrender."

"But he'll be maybe counselled better," rejoined the leddy, inwardly rejoicing at the discovery she had made, and anxious to get rid of

the visitor, in order that she might act at once; "and, if ye'll tak' my advice, ye'll no scaud your lips in other folk's kail. Mr Pitwinnoch is just as gude a Belzebub's baby for a law-plea as ony writer to the signet in that bottomless pit, the House o' Parliament in Edinbrough; and since ye hae told me what ye hae done, it's but right to let you ken what I'll do. As yet I hae had but ae lawsuit, and I trow it was soon brought, by my own mediation, to a victory; but it winna be lang till I hae another, for if Milrookit doesna consent, the morn's morning, to gie up the Kittlestonheugh, he'll soon fin' again what it is to plea wi' a woman o' my experience."

Pilledge was petrified: he saw that he was in the hands of the leddy, and that she had completely overreached him. But still he was resolved that his journey should not be barren if he could possibly prevent it. He accordingly wished her good afternoon, and returning to the inn, ordered a chaise and proceeded to Kittlestonheugh.

The moment that he left the leddy her cloak and bonnet were put in requisition, and attended by her maid, on whose arm she leaned, being still lame with the rheumatism, she sallied forth to Pitwinnoch's office, resolved on action.

He had not, however, acted on what she called her great bed and board plea entirely to her satisfaction; for she thought, had he seen the rights of her case as well as she did herself, and had counselled her better, she might have got

much more than a thousand pounds. She was therefore determined, if he showed the least hesitation in obeying her "peremptors," that she would immediately proceed to Mr Whitteret's office and appoint him her agent. How she happened to imagine that she had any right to institute proceedings against Milrookit for the restoration of the estate to Walkinshaw will be best understood by our narrative of what passed at the consultation.

CHAPTER XCV

IT was a happy thing for me, Mr Pitwinnoch," said the leddy after being seated in his inner chamber, "a happy thing, indeed, that I had a father, and sic a father as he was. Weel kent he the rights o' the law; so that I may say I was brought up at the feet o' Gamaliel. But the bed and board plea, Mr Pitwinnoch, that ye thought sae lightly o', and wanted me to mak' a sacrifice o' wi' an arbitration, was bairn's-play to the case I hae noo in hand. Ye maun ken, then, that I hae ta'en a suspecktion in my head that Milrookit—the de'il rook him for what he did to me—has nae right because to keep, in a wrongous manner, my gudeman's estate and property o' the Kittlestonheugh. 'Deed, Mr Pitwinnoch, ye may glower; but it's my intent and purpose to gar him surrender at discretion, in due course of law. So he'll see what it is to deal wi' a woman o' my legality. In short, Mr Pitwinnoch, I'll mak' him fin' that I'm a statute at large; for, as I said before, the thousand pounds was but erles, and a foretaste that I hae been ouer lang, Mr Pitwinnoch, of going to law."

"You surprise me, madam. I cannot understand what you mean," replied the astonished lawyer.

"Your surprise, and having no understanding, Mr Pitwinnoch, is a symptom to me that ye're no qualified to conduct my case: but before going to Thomas Whitteret, who, as I am creditably informed, is a man o' a most great capacity, I thought it was but right to sound the depth o' your judgment and learning o' the law, and if I found you o' a proper sufficiency, to gie you a preferment, 'cause ye were my agent in the last plea."

"But, madam," said the astonished lawyer, "how can you possibly have fancied that Mr Milrookit has not, in right of his wife, properly succeeded to the estate?"

"Because she's no a male-heir, being, in terms of the Act, but a woman. What say ye to that? Isna that baith a nice point and a ground of action? Na, ye needna look sae constipated, Mr Pitwinnoch, for the heirs-general o' Margaret, the dochter, hae a better right than the heir-at-law o' George, the third and last son, the same being an heir-female."

"In the name of goodness, where have you, madam, collected all this stuff?"

"Stuff, Mr Pitwinnoch! Is that the way to speak o' my legality? Howsever, since ye're sae dumbfoundered, I'll just be as plain's I'm pleasant wi' you. Stuff, truly! I think Mr Whitteret's the man for me."

"I beg your pardon, Mrs Walkinshaw: but I

wish you would be a little more explicit, and come to the point."

"Havena I come to ae point already anent the male-heir?"

"True, madam," said the lawyer; "but even admitting all you have stated to be perfectly correct, Mr Milrookit then has the right in himself; for ye know it is to the heirs-general of his mother, and not to herself, that the property goes."

"Ye needna tell me that. Do you think I dinna ken that he's an heir-general to his mother, being her only child? Ye mak' light, I canna but say, o' my understanding, Mr Pitwinnoch. Howsever, is't no plain that his wife, not being an heir-male, is debarred frae succeeding; and he, being an heir-general, cannot, according to the law of the case, succeed? Surely, Mr Pitwinnoch, that's no to be contested? Therefore, I maintain that he is lawfully bound to renounce the property, and that he shall do the morn's morning if there's a toun-officer in Glasgow."

"But, madam, you have no possible right to it!" exclaimed the lawyer, puzzled.

"Me! Am I a male-heir?—an aged woman and a grandmother! Surely, Mr Pitwinnoch, your education maun hae been greatly negleckit to ken so little o' the laws o' nature and nations. No: the heir-male is a young man, the eldest son's only son."

The lawyer began to quake for his client as the leddy proceeded—

"For ye ken that the deed of entail was first on Walter, the second son; and, failing his heirs-male, then on George and his heirs-male; and, failing them, then it went back to Charles, the eldest son, and to his heirs-male. If there's law in the land, his only son ought to be an heir-male, afore Milrookit's wife, that's but an only dochter."

"Has Mr Whitteret put this into your head? He was bred wi' Keelevin, who drew up the deed," said the lawyer seriously, struck with the knowledge which the leddy seemed to have so miraculously acquired of the provisions of the entail.

"I dinna need Mr Whitteret, nor ony sic-like, to instruct me in terms o' law; for I got an inkling and an instinct o' the whole nine points frae my worthy father, that was himsel' bred an advocate, and had more law-pleas on his hands when he died than ony ither three lairds in Carrick, Coil, and Cunningham. But no to be my own trumpeter: ye'll just, Mr Pitwinnoch, write a mandamus to Milrookit, in a civil manner—mind that; and tell him in the same that I'll be greatly obligated if he'll gie up the house and property of Kittlestonheugh to the heir-male, James Walkinshaw, his cousin; or, failing therein, ye'll say that I hae implemented you to pronounce an interlocutor against him; and ye may gie him a bit hint frae yoursel'—in a *noty beny* at the bottom—that you advise him to conform, because you

are creditably informed that I mean to pursue him wi' a' the law o' my displeasure."

"Does your grandson know anything of this extraordinary business?" said Pitwinnoch; but the leddy parried the question by saying—

"That's no our present sederunt; but I would ask you if ye do not think I hae the justice o' this plea?"

"Indeed, madam, to say the truth, I shall not be surprised if you have; but there is no need to be so peremptory. The business may be as well settled by an amicable arrangement."

"What's the use of an amicable arrangement? Isna the law the law? Surely I didna come to a lawyer for sic dowf and dowie proceedings as amicable arrangements. No, Mr Pitwinnoch, ye see yoursel' that I hae discern't on the rights o' the case, and therefore (for I maun be short wi' you, for talking to me o' amicable arrangements) ye may save your breath to cool your porridge. My will and pleasure is that Walkinshaw Milrookit shall do to-morrow morning, in manner of law, then and there, dispone and surrender unto the heir-male of the late Claud Walkinshaw of Kittlestonheugh, in the shire o' Lanark, and synod of Glasgow and Ayr, all and sundry the houses and lands aforesaid, according to the provisions of an Act made and passed in the reign of our sovereign lord the king. Ye see, Mr Pitwinnoch, that I'm no a daw in barrow't feathers, to be picket and pooket in the way I was by sic trash as the Milrookits."

The leddy, having thus instructed her lawyer, bade him adieu, and returned home leaning on her maid's arm, and on the best possible terms with herself, scarcely for a moment doubting a favourable result to a proceeding that, in courtesy, we must call her second lawsuit.

CHAPTER XCVI

THE shipwreck of the third laird had left an awful impression on the minds of all the Glengael party, who immediately after that disaster returned to the castle. To Mrs Eadie it afforded the strongest confirmation that she had inherited the inspiring mantle of her maternal race; and her dreams and visions, which happily for herself were of the most encouraging augury, became more and more frequent, and her language increased in mystery and metaphor.

"Death," said she, "has performed his task: the winds of heaven and the ocean waves have obeyed the mandate, and the moon has verified her influence on the destinies of men. But the volume with the brazen clasps has not yet been opened—the chronicled wisdom of ages has not yet been unfolded—Antiquity and Learning are still silent in their niches, and their faces veiled."

It was of no avail to argue with her, even in her soberest moods, against the fatal consequences of yielding so entirely to the somnambulism of her malady. Her friends listened to her with a solemn compassion, and only hoped that in the course of

the summer some improvement might take place in her health, and allay that extreme occasional excitement of her nervous system which produced such mournful effects on a mind of rare and splendid endowments. In the hopes of this favourable change it was agreed, when Mr Frazer was called to Edinburgh on professional business, as we have already mentioned, that the family should, on her account, remain till late in the year at Glengael.

Meanwhile Walkinshaw and French Frazer were proceeding with their recruiting; and it was soon evident to the whole party that the latter had attached himself in a particular manner to Mary. Mrs Eadie, if not the first who observed it, was the first who spoke of it; but instead of using that sort of strain which ladies of a certain age commonly employ on such affairs, she boded of bridal banquets in the loftiest poetry of her prophetical phraseology. The fortunes of Walkinshaw and Ellen were lost sight of in the mystical presages of this new theme, till the letters arrived from Mr Frazer announcing the discovery of the provisions in the deed of entail, and requesting his young friend to come immediately to Edinburgh.

"The clasped book of antiquity," said Mrs Eadie, "is now open. Who shall dispute the oracles of fate?"

But, with all the perspicuity of her second-sight, she saw nothing of what was passing at

Kittlestonheugh on the same afternoon in which these letters reached the castle.

Mr Pilledge, it will be recollected, immediately after his interview with the leddy proceeded in a post-chaise to see Milrookit; and as he was not embarrassed with much professional diffidence, the purpose of his visit was soon explained. The consternation with which Walky heard of the discovery will be easier imagined than described; but something like a ray of hope and pleasure glimmered in the prospect that Pilledge held out of being able either to break the entail or to procrastinate the contest to an indefinite period, at an expense of less than half the rental of the property.

While they were thus engaged in discussing the subject, and Milrookit was entering as cordially into the views of the Edinburgh writer as could on so short a notice be reasonably expected, Mr Pitwinnoch was announced. The instinct of birds of a feather, as the proverb says, had often before brought him into contact with Pilledge, and a few words of explanation enabled the triumvirate to understand the feelings of each other thoroughly.

"But," said Pitwinnoch, "I am instructed to take immediate steps to establish the rights of the heir of entail."

"So much the better," replied Pilledge; "the business could not be in abler hands. You can act for your client in the most satisfactory

manner, and as Mr Milrookit will authorise me to proceed for him, it will be hard if we cannot make a tough pull."

Mr Pitwinnoch thought so too, and then amused them with a laughable account of the instructions he had received from the leddy to demand the surrender of the estate and the acknowledgment of the heir in the course of the following day. Pilledge in like manner recounted, in his dry and pawkie style, the interview which he had himself with the same ingenious and redoubtable matron; and, that nothing might be wanting to the enjoyment of their jokes and funny recitals, Milrookit ordered in wine, and they were all as jocose as possible, when the servant brought a letter. It was from Mr Whitteret, written at the suggestion of Mr Frazer, to whom he had, immediately after parting from Pilledge in the Register Office, communicated the discovery. It simply announced that steps were taken to serve Walkinshaw heir to the estate, and suggested that, on account of the relationship of the parties, it might be as well to obviate, by an admission of the claim, the necessity of any exposure, or of the institution of unpleasant proceedings, for the fraud that had been practised.

Milrookit trembled as he read; Pitwinnoch looked aghast, for he perceived that his own conduct in the transaction might be sifted; and Pilledge, foreseeing there would be no use for

him, quietly took his hat and slipped away, leaving them to their own meditations.

"This is a dreadful calamity," were the first words that Milrookit uttered after a silence of several minutes.

"It is a most unlucky discovery," said Pitwinnoch.

"And this threat of exposure!" responded his client.

"And my character brought into peril!" exclaimed the lawyer.

"Had you not rashly advised me," said Milrookit, "I should never for a moment have thought of retaining the property."

"Both your father and yourself, sir," retorted the lawyer, "thought if it could be done, it ought. I but did my duty as your lawyer in recommending what you so evidently wished."

"That is not the fact, sir," replied Milrookit sharply; and the conversation proceeded to become more abrupt and vehement, till the anger of high words assumed the form of action, and the lawyer and his client rushed like two bulldogs on each other. At that crisis the door was suddenly opened, and the old leddy, looking in, said—

"Shake him weel, Mr Pitwinnoch, and if he'll no conform, I redde ye gar him conform."

The rage of the combatants was instantly extinguished, and they stood pale and confounded, trembling in every limb.

It had happened, after the leddy returned home from Pitwinnoch's, that Robina called, in the carriage, to effect, if possible, a reconciliation with her, which, for reasons we need not mention, her husband had engaged her that afternoon to do, and she had, in consequence, brought her, in the spirit of friendship, as she imagined, out to Kittlestonheugh. The leddy, however, prided herself on being almost as dexterous a diplomatician as she was learned in the law, and she affected to receive her granddaughter in the spirit of a total oblivion of all injuries.

"Ye ken, Beenie, my dear," said she, "that I'm an aged person, and for a' the few and evil days I hae before me in this howling wilderness, it's vera natural that I should like to make a conciliation wi' my grandchilder, who I hope will a' live in comfort wi' one another —every one getting his own right; for it's a sore thing to go to law, although I hae some reason to know that there are folks in our family that ken mair o' the nine points than they let wit. So I'm cordial glad to see you, Beenie, and I take it so kind that if ye'll gie me a hurl in the carriage, and send me hame at night, I'll no objeck to gang wi' you and speer for your gudeman, for whom I hae a manner o' respeck, even though he was a thought unreasonable anent my charge o' moderation for the bed and board."

But the truth is that the leddy, from the

moment Robina entered the room, was seized with the thirst of curiosity to know how Milrookit would receive the claim, and had, in this eccentric manner, contrived to get herself taken to the scene of action.

CHAPTER XCVII

RECALLED to their senses by the interruption, both Milrookit and his lawyer saw that their interests and characters were too intimately linked in the consequences of the discovery to allow them to incur the hazards of a public disclosure. Pitwinnoch was the first who recovered his presence of mind, and, with great cleverness, he suddenly turned round and addressed himself to the leddy—

"Though we have had a few words, Mr Milrookit is quite sensible that he has not a shadow of reason to withhold the estate from the heir of entail. He will give it up the moment that it is demanded."

"Then I demand it this moment!" exclaimed the leddy; "and out of this house, that was my ain, I'll no depart till Jamie Walkinshaw, the righteous male-heir, comes to tak' possession. It was a most jewdical habit-and-repute-like action o' you, Walky Milrookit, to reset and keep this fine property on a point of law; and I canna see how you'll clear your character o' the coom[1] ye

[1] *Coom.* Grime.

hae brought on't by sic á diminishment of the grounds of the case between an heir-male and an heir-female."

Milrookit, seeing his wife coming into the room, and eager to get the business closed as happily as possible, requested Pitwinnoch to follow him into another apartment; to which they immediately retired, leaving the ladies together.

"Beenie," said the leddy, with the most ineffable self-satisfied equanimity, "I hope ye'll prepare yoursel' to hear wi' composity the sore affliction that I'm ordain't to gie you. Eh, Beenie! honesty's a braw thing; and I'll no say that your gudeman, my ain oe, hasna been a deevil that should get his dues—what they are, the laws and lawyers as weel as me ken are little short o' the halter. But, for a' that, our ain kith and kin, Beenie—we maun jook and let the jawp gae by.[1] So I counsel you to pack up your ends and your awls, and flit your camp wi' a' the speed ye dow; for there's no saying what a rampageous soldier-officer, whose trade is to shoot folk, may say or do when Jamie Walkinshaw comes to ken the battle that I hae fought wi' sic triumphing."

Mrs Milrookit, who was totally uninformed either of the circumstances of her situation or of what had taken place, felt scarcely more amazement than terror at this speech, and in perceiving that her grandmother was acquainted with the business which had brought her husband and

[1] To *jook* is to evade, and the *jawp* is a splash of mud.

Pitwinnoch to such high words that their voices were heard before the carriage reached the door.

"What has happened?" was the anxious exclamation of her alarm.

"Only a discovery that has been made among the Faculty o' Advocates that a dochter's no a male-heir. So you, being but the heir-female of George, the third son, by course o' nature the property goes back to the son of Charles, the eldest son, he being, in the words of the Act, an heir-male; and your husband, Walkinshaw Milrookit, being an heir-general of Margaret, the daughter, is, in a sense o' law, no heir at all, which is the reason that your cousin Jamie comes in for the estate, and that you and Milrookit must take up your bed and walk to some other dwelling-place; for here, at Kittlestonheugh, ye hae no continued city, Beenie, my dear, and I'm very sorry for you. It's wi' a very heavy heart and an e'e o' pity that I'm obligated not to be beautiful on the mountains, but to tell you thir sore news."

"Then I'm to understand," replied Robina, with a degree of composure that surprised the leddy, "it has been discovered that my uncle Charles's family were not entirely disinherited, but that James succeeds to the estate? It is only to be regretted that this was not known sooner, before we took up our residence here."

"It's an auld saying, Beenie, and a true saying, as I know from my own experience, that the law is a tether o' length and durability; so ye need

be nane surprised, considering the short time bygane since your father's death, that the panel wasna brought to judgment sooner. Indeed, if it hadna been by my instrumentality, and the implementing o' the case that I gied to Pitwinnoch, there's no saying how long it would hae been pending afore the Lords."

While the leddy was thus delivering what she called her dark sentence o' legality, Pitwinnoch and Milrookit returned into the room, and the former said to the leddy—

"I'm happy to inform you, madam, that Mr Milrookit acts in the handsomest manner. He is quite satisfied that his cousin, Mr Walkinshaw, is the true heir of entail, and is prepared to resign the estate at once."

"Didna I prove to you, Mr Pitwinnoch, that wi' baith his feet he hadna ae leg in law to stand on; but ye misdootit my judgment," replied the leddy exultingly.

"But," continued the lawyer, "in consideration of this most honourable acquiescence at once on his part, I have undertaken that ye'll repay the thousand pounds which, you must be sensible, was a most ridiculous sum for six weeks' bed and board in your house."

"Truly, and ye're no far wrang, Mr Pitwinnoch. It was a vera ridiculous soom; for if I had stood out I might hae got twa thousand, if no mair. But I canna understand how it is possible you can think I'll part wi' my lawfu'

won money for naething. What's the gieing up o' the estate to the male-heir to me? I'll get neither plack nor bawbee by't, unless it please Jamie to gie me a bit present, by way o' a fee, for counselling you how to set about the precognition that's gotten him his right. Na, na, no ae farthing will I faik."

"Then, madam, I shall feel it my duty to advise Mr Milrookit to revive the question and take the matter into court upon a ground of error," said the lawyer.

"Tak' it, tak' it; pleasure yoursel' in that way; ye can do naething mair cordial to me. But I think ye ought to know, and Milrookit to understand, baith by bed, board, and washing, and heirs-male, what it is to try the law wi' me."

The lawyer and his client exchanged looks. The leddy, however, continued her address—

"Howsever, Mr Pitwinnoch, sure am I there was no mistake in the business; for ye'll bear in mind that ye made me an offer of twa hundred, the whilk I refused, and then ye brought me my justly due. That settles the point o' law—tak' my word for't."

"I am afraid," said Pitwinnoch to his rueful client, "that there is no chance——"

"'Deed no, Mr Pitwinnoch," replied the leddy; "neither pursuer nor respondent has ony chance wi' me in that plea; so just shake your lugs and lie down again. A' your barking would prove afore the Lords but as water spilt on the ground;

for the money is in an heritable bond, the whilk bond is in my hands: that's the strong ground o' the case—touch it whan ye may."

Pitwinnoch could with difficulty keep his gravity, and poor Milrookit, finding he had so overreached himself, said—

"Well, but when you make your will I trust and hope you will then consider how simply I gave you the money."

"Mak' my will!—that's a delicate hint to an aged woman. I'll no forget that; and as to your simplicity in paying the justly due for bed, board, and washing, wasna every pound got as if it had been a tooth out o' your head, howkit out by course and force o' law?"

"In truth, leddy," said Pitwinnoch, "we are all friends here, and it's just as well to speak freely. I advised Mr Milrookit to pay you the money rather than hazard any question that might possibly attract attention to the provisions of the entail; but now, since the whole has been brought to an issue, you must be sensible that he suffers enough in losing the estate, and that you ought to give him back the money."

The leddy sat for several minutes silent, evidently cogitating an answer, at the end of which she raised her eyes and said to Pitwinnoch—

"I can see as far through a millstane as ye can do through a fir deal, and maybe I may tak' it in my head to raise a plea wi' you in an action of damages for plotting and libelling in the way

that it's vera visible ye hae done, jointly and severally, in a plea of the Crown; and aiblins I'll no tak' less than a thousand pounds; so, Mr Pitwinnoch, keep your neck out o' the woody[1] o' a law-plea wi' me, if ye can; for, in the way of business, I hae done wi' you; and, as soon as Mr Whitteret comes hame, I'll see whether I ought not to instruct in a case against you for the art and part conspiracy of the thousand pounds."

Milrookit himself was obliged to laugh at the look of consternation with which this thunderclap broke over the lawyer, who, unable to withstand the absurdity of the threat, and yet alarmed for the consequences to his reputation which such an attempt would entail, hastily retired.

[1] *Woody.* Halter.

CHAPTER XCVIII

THE leddy, having so happily brought her second lawsuit to a victorious issue, and already menacing a third, did not feel that her triumph would be complete until she had obtained the plaudits of the world; and the first person on whom she resolved to levy her exactions of applause was naturally enough the mother of Walkinshaw.

As soon as Pitwinnoch had left the house she persuaded Milrookit to send the carriage for Mrs Charles, with injunctions to the coachman not to say a word of what had passed, as she intended herself to have the pleasure of communicating the glad tidings. This he very readily agreed to; for, notwithstanding the grudge which he felt at having been so simply mulcted of so large a sum, he really felt his mind relieved by the result of the discovery; perhaps, in complying, he had some sinister view towards the leddy's goodwill —some distant vista of his thousand pounds.

Mrs Charles was a good deal surprised at the message to come immediately to Kittlestonheugh; and her timid and gentle spirit, in consequence of learning from the coachman that the old lady was

there, anticipated some disaster to her son. Her fears fluttered as she drove on alone. The broad dark shadows that had crossed the path of her past pilgrimage were remembered with melancholy forebodings, and the twilight of the evening having almost faded into night, she caught gloomy presentiments from the time, and sighed that there was no end to her sorrows.

The season was now advanced into September; and though the air was clear, the darkness of the road, the silence of the fields, and the occasional glimmers of the fire that the horses' hoofs struck from the stones awakened associations of doubt, anxiety, and danger; but the serene magnificence of the starry heavens inspired hope, and the all-encompassing sky seemed to her the universal wings of Providence, vigilant and protecting with innumerable millions of eyes.

Still, the devotional enthusiasm of that fancy was but a transient glow on the habitual pale cast of her thoughts; and she saw before her, in the remainder of her mortal journey, only a continuance of the same road which she had long travelled—a narrow and a difficult track across a sterile waste, harsh with brambles, and bleak and lonely.

So is it often, under the eclipse of fortune, even with the bravest spirits: forgetting how suddenly before, in the darkest hour, the views of life have changed, they yield to the aspect of the moment, and breathe the mean and peevish complaints of

faithlessness and despondency. Let it not therefore be imputed as an unworthy weakness that a delicate and lowly widow, whose constant experience had been an unbroken succession of disappointments and humiliations, should in such an hour, and shrinking with the sensibilities of a mother, wonder, almost to sinning, why she had been made to suffer such a constancy of griefs. But the midnight of her fate was now past, and the dawn was soon to open upon her with all its festal attributes of a bright and joyous morning, —though our friend the leddy was not so brisk in communicating the change as we could have wished.

She was sitting alone in the parlour when the carriage returned; and as the trembling mother was shown into the room, she received her with the most lugubrious face that her features could assume.

"Come awa', Bell Fatherlans," said she, "come awa', and sit down. Oh, this is a most uncertain world! Nothing in it has stability:—the winds blow—the waters run—the grass grows—the snow falls—the day flieth away unto the uttermost parts of the sea, and the night hideth her head in the morning cloud and perisheth for evermore. Many a lesson we get—many a warning to set our thoughts on things above; but we're aye sinking, sinking, sinking, as the sparks fly upward. Bell, Bell, we're a' like thorns crackling under a kail-pot!"

"What has occurred?" exclaimed Mrs Charles. "I beg you'll tell me at once."

"So I will, when I hae solaced you into a religious frame o' mind to hear me wi' a Christian composity o' temper; for what I maun tell is, though I say't mysel', a something."

"For goodness and mercy, I entreat you to proceed. Where is Mr Milrookit? Where is Robina?"

"Ye needna hope to see muckle o' them the night," replied the leddy. "Poor folk, they hae gotten their hands filled wi' cares! O Bell, Bell —when I think o't—it's a judgment—it's a judgment, Bell Fatherlans, aboon the capacity o' man! Really, when I consider how I hae been directed—and a' by my own skill, knowledge, wisdom, and understanding—it's past a' comprehension. What would my worthy father hae said had he lived to see the day that his dochter won sic a braw estate by her ain interlocutors? And what would your gudefather hae said, when he was aye brag bragging o' the conquest he had made o' the Kittlestonheugh o' his ancestors—the whilk took him a lifetime to do —had he seen me, just wi' a single whisk o' dexterity, a bit touch of the law, make the vera same conquest for your son, Jamie Walkinshaw, in less than twa hours?"

"You astonish me! To what do you allude? I am amazed, and beginning to be confounded," said Mrs Charles.

"Indeed it is no wonder," replied the leddy; "for wha would hae thought it, that I, an aged literate grandmother, would hae bamboozlet an Embrough writer to the signet on a nice point, and found out the ground of an action for damages against that tod o' a bodie Pitwinnoch for intromitting wi' ane of the four pleas o' the Crown? Had I kent what I ken now, uncle Watty might still hae been to the fore, and in the full possession of his seven lawful senses; for, woman as I am, I would hae been my own man o' business, counsel, and executioner in the concos mentos sederunt whereby I was so 'frauded o' my rightful hope and expectation. But Pitwinnoch will soon fin' the weight o' the lion's paw that his doobileecity has roused in me."

Mrs Charles, who was much amused by the exultation with which the leddy had recounted her exploits in the bed and board plea, perceiving that some new triumph equally improbable had occurred, felt her anxieties subside into curiosity; and being now tolerably mistress of her feelings, she again inquired what had happened.

"I'll tell you," said the leddy; "and surely it's right and proper you, his mother, should know that, through my implementing, it has been discovered that your son is an heir-male according to law!"

"No possible!" exclaimed the delighted

mother, the whole truth flashing at once on her mind.

"Ay, that's just as I might hae expectit: a prophet ne'er got honour in his own country; and so a' the thank I'm to get for my pains is a 'no possible'!" said the leddy, offended, mistaking the meaning of the interjection. "But it is a true possible; and Milrookit has consentit to adjudicate the estate; so ye see how ye're raised to pride and affluence by my instrumentality. Firstly, by the bed and board plea I found a mean to revisidend your 'nuity; and, secondly, I hae found the libel proven that Beenie, being a dochter, is an heir-female, and is, by course of law, obligated to renounce the estate."

"This is most extraordinary news indeed," rejoined Mrs Charles, "after for so many years believing my poor children so destitute;" and a flood of tears happily came to her relief.

"But, Bell Fatherlans," resumed the leddy, "I'll tak' you wi' the tear in your e'e, as both you and Jamie maun be sensible that, but for my discerning, this great thing never could hae been brought to a come-to-pass. I hope ye'll confabble thegither anent the loss I sustained by what happened to uncle Watty, and mak' me a reasonable compensation out o' the rents, the whilk are noo, as I am creditably informed, better than fifteen hundred pounds per anno Domini,—that's the legality for the year o' our Lord—: a sma' matter will be a great satisfaction."

"Indeed," said Mrs Charles, "James owes you much; and your kindness in giving him the bill so generously, I know, has made a very deep impression on his heart."

"He was aye a blithe and kindly creature," exclaimed the leddy, wiping her eye as if a tear had actually shot into it, "and maybe it winna fare the waur wi' him when I'm dead and gone. For I'll let you into a secret. It's my purpose to mak' a last will and testament, and cut off Milrookit wi' a shilling, for his horridable niggerality about the bed and board concern. Na, for that matter, as ye'll can fen' noo without ony 'nuity but your ain son's affection, I hae a great mind, —and I'll do't too, that's what I will, for fear I should be wheedled into an adversary by my dochter Meg for the Milrookits,—I'll gie the thousand pound heritable bond to your Mary for a tocher. Is not that most genteel of me? I doot few families hae had a grandmother for their ancestor like yours."

Some further conversation to the same effect was continued, and the injustice which Milrookit had attempted seemed to Mrs Charles considerably extenuated by the readiness with which he had acknowledged the rights of her son. For, notwithstanding all the leddy's triumphant oratory and legal phraseology, she had no difficulty in perceiving the true circumstances of the case.

CHAPTER XCIX

In the opinion of all the most judicious critics, the Iliad terminated with the death of Hector; but as Homer has entertained us with the mourning of the Trojans and the funeral of the hero, we cannot, in our present circumstances, do better than adopt the rule of that great example. For, although it must be evident to all our readers that the success of the leddy in her second lawsuit, by placing the heir, in despite of all the devices and stratagem of parchments and Pitwinnoch, in possession of the patrimony of his ancestors, naturally closes the *Entail*,—a work that will, no doubt, outlive the Iliad,—still there were so many things immediately consequent on that event that our story would be imperfect without some account of them.

In the first place, then, Walkinshaw, immediately after the receipt of Frazer's letter acquainting him with the discovery of the provisions of the deed, returned to Edinburgh, where he arrived on the third day after his friend had heard from Whitteret, the Glasgow writer, that Milrookit, without objection, agreed to surrender the estate.

The result of this communication was an immediate and formal declaration from Walkinshaw of his attachment to Ellen, and a cheerful consent from her father that their marriage, as soon as the necessary preparations could be made, should be celebrated at Glengael.

Upon French Frazer the good fortune of his brother officer was no less decisive, for any scruple that he might have felt in his attachment to Mary on account of his own circumstances was removed by an assurance from Walkinshaw that he would, as soon as possible, make a liberal provision both for her and his mother; and in the same letter which Walkinshaw wrote home on his return to Edinburgh, and in which he spoke of his own marriage, he entreated his mother's consent that Mary should accept the hand of Frazer.

On Mrs Eadie the fulfilment, as she called it, of her visions and predictions had the most lamentable effect. Her whole spirit became engrossed with the most vague and mystical conceptions; and it was soon evident that an irreparable ruin had fallen upon one of the noblest of minds. Over her latter days we shall therefore draw a veil, and conclude her little part in our eventful history with simply mentioning that she never returned to Camrachle, but sank into rest in the visionary beatitude of her parental solitudes.

Her husband, now a venerable old man, still

resides as contentedly as ever in his parish; and when we last visited him in his modest mansion, he informed us that he had acquiesced in the wishes of his elders by consenting to receive a helper and successor in the ministry. So far, therefore, as the best, the most constant, and the kindest friends of the disinherited family are concerned our task is finished; but we have a world of things to tell of the leddy and the Milrookits, many of which we must reserve till we shall have leisure to write a certain story of incomparable humour and pathos.

In the meantime we must proceed to mention that the leddy, finding it was quite unnecessary to institute any further proceedings to eject the Milrookits from Kittlestonheugh, as they of their own accord removed as soon as they found a suitable house, returned to her residence in the royal city, where she resumed her domestic thrift at the spinning-wheel, having resolved not to go on with her action of damages against Pitwinnoch till she had seen her grandson, who, prior to his marriage, was daily expected.

"For," as she said to his mother after consulting with Mr Whitteret and stating her grounds of action, "it is not so clear a case as my great bed and board plea; and Mr Whitteret is in some doubt whether Pitwinnoch should be sent to trial by my instrumentality or that of Jamie, very sensibly observing,—for he's really a man o' the height o' discretion you,—that it would be hard

for an aged gentlewoman like me, with a straitened jointure, to take up a cause that would, to a moral certainty, be defendit, especially when her grandson is so much better able to afford the expense. The which opinion of counsel has made me sit down with an arrest of judgment for the present, as the only reason I hae for going to law at all is to mak' money by it. Howsever, if ye can persuade Jamie to bequeath and dispone to me his right to the damage, which I mean to assess at a thousand pounds, I'll implement Mr Whitteret to pursue."

"I dare say," replied Mrs Charles, "that James will very readily give up to you all his claim; but Mr Pitwinnoch having rectified the mistake he was in, we should forgive and forget."

"A' weel I wat, Bell Fatherlans, I needna cast my pearls of great price before swine, by waring my words o' wisdom wi' the like o' you. In truth, it's an awfu' story when I come to think how ye hae been sitting like an effigy on a tomb, wi' your hands baith alike syde, and *menti mori* written on your vesture and your thigh, instead o' stirring your stumps, as ye ought to hae done, no to let your bairns be rookit o' their right by yon Cain and Abel, the twa cheatrie Milrookits. For sure am I, had no I ta'en the case in hand, ye might hae continued singing 'Wally, wally, up yon bank, and wally, wally, down yon brae,' a' the days o' your tarrying in the tabernacles o' men."

Her daughter-in-law admitted that she was indeed, with all her family, under the greatest obligations to her, and that in all probability, but for her happy discovery of the errand on which the writer to the signet had come to Glasgow, they might still have had their rights withheld.

In conversations of this description the time passed at Glasgow, while the preparations for the marriage of Walkinshaw and Ellen were proceeding with all expedient speed at Glengael. Immediately after the ceremony the happy pair, accompanied by Mary, returned to Edinburgh, where it was determined the marriage of Mary with French Frazer should be celebrated, Mrs Charles and the old lady being equally desirous of being present.

We should not, however, be doing justice to ourselves as faithful historians were we to leave the reader under an impression that the leddy's visit to the lawful metropolis was entirely dictated by affectionate consideration for her grandchildren. She had higher and more public objects, worthy indeed of the spirit with which she had so triumphantly conducted her causes. But with that remarkable prudence so conspicuous in her character, she made no one acquainted with the real motives by which she was actuated, namely, to acquire some knowledge of the criminal law, her father not having, as she said, "paid attention to that court of justice, his

geni being, like her own, more addicted to the civilities of the Court o' Session."

She was led to think of embarking in this course of study by the necessity she was often under of making, as she said, her servants "walk the carpet;" or, in other words, submit to receive those kind of benedictions to which servants are, in the opinion of all good administrators of household, so often and so justly entitled. It had occurred to her that, some time or another, occasion might require that she should carry a delinquent handmaid before the magistrates, or even before the Lords: indeed, she was determined to do so on the very first occurrence of transgression, and therefore she was naturally anxious to obtain a little insight of the best practice in the Parliament House, that she might, as she said herself, be made capable of implementing her man of business how to proceed.

Walkinshaw, by promising to take every legal step that she herself could take against Pitwinnoch, had evinced, as she considered it, such a commendable respect for her judgment that he endeared himself to her more than ever. He was in consequence employed to conduct her to the Parliament House, that she might hear the pleadings; but by some mistake he took her to that sink of sin, the theatre, when *Othello* was performing, where (as she declared) she had received all the knowledge of the criminal law she could require, it having been manifestly

shown that any woman stealing a napkin ought to be prosecuted with the utmost rigour. But her legal studies were soon interrupted by the wedding festivities; and when she returned to Glasgow, alas! she was not long permitted to indulge her legal pursuits; for various causes combined to deprive the world of our incomparable heroine. Her doleful exit from the tents of time, law, and physic it is now our melancholy duty to relate, which we shall endeavour to do with all that good-humoured pathos for which we are so greatly and so deservedly celebrated. If nobody says we are so distinguished, we must modestly do it ourselves, never having been able to understand why a candidate for Parliament or popularity should be allowed to boast of his virtues more than any other dealer in tales and fictions.

CHAPTER C

MARRIAGE feasts, we are creditably informed, as the leddy would have said, are of greater antiquity than funerals; and those with which the weddings of Walkinshaw and his sister were celebrated lacked nothing of the customary festivities. The dinners which took place in Edinburgh were, of course, served with all the refinements of taste and dissertations on character which render the entertainments in the metropolis of mind occasionally so racy and peculiar. But the cut-and-come-again banquets of Glasgow, as the leddy called them, following on the return of the laird and his bride to his patrimonial seat, were in her opinion far superior, and she enjoyed them with equal glee and zest.

"Thanks be and praise," said she after returning home from one of those costly piles of food, "I hae lived to see at last something like wedding doings in my family. Charlie's and Bell Fatherlans's was a cauldrife commodity, boding scant and want, and so cam' o't; Watty's was a walloping galravitch o' idiocety, and so cam' o't; Geordie's was little better than a burial formality,

trying to gie a smirk, and so cam' o't; as for Meg's and Dirdumwhamle's, theirs was a third marriage—a cauld-kail-het-again affair; and Beenie and Walky's Gretna Green play-actoring—bed, board, and washing bore witness and testimony to whatna kind o' bridal they had. But thir jocose gavaulings are worthy o' the occasion. Let naebody tell me noo that the three P's o' Glasgow mean Packages, Puncheons, and Pigtail, for I have seen and known that they may be read in a marginal note, Pomp, Punch, and Plenty. To be sure, the Embroshers are no without a genteelity,—that maun be condescended to them. But I jealouse they're pinched to get gude wine, poor folk—they try sae many different bottles: naething hae they like a gausie bowl. Therefore commend me to our ain countryside,—fatted calves and feasting Belshazzars,—and let the Embroshers cerimoneez wi' their Pharaoh's lean kine and Grants and Frazers."

But often when the heart exults, when the "bosom's lord sits light upon his throne," it is an omen of sorrow. On the very night after this happy revel of the spirits the leddy caught a fatal cold, in consequence of standing in the current of a door while the Provost's wife, putting on her pattens, stopped the way, and she was next morning so indisposed that it was found necessary to call in Dr Sinney to attend her, who was of opinion that, considering she was

upwards of seventy-six, it might go hard with her if she did not recover; and this being communicated to her friends, they began to prepare themselves for the worst.

Her daughter, the lady of Dirdumwhamle, came in from the country and paid her every mark of attention. At the suggestion of her husband, she once or twice intimated a little anxiety to know if her mother had made a will; but the leddy cut her short by saying—

"What's t'at to thee, Meg? I'm sure I'm no dead yet, that t'ou should be groping about my bit gathering?"

Dirdumwhamle himself rode daily into Glasgow in the most dutiful manner; but, receiving no satisfaction from the accounts of his wife respecting the leddy's affairs, he was, of course, deeply concerned at her situation; and on one occasion, when he was sitting in the most sympathising manner at her bedside, he said, with an affectionate and tender voice, "That he hoped she would soon be well again; but if it was ordain't to be otherwise, he trusted she would give her daughter some small memorial over and by what she might hae alloo't her in will."

"'Deed," replied the leddy, as she sat supported by pillows and breathing heavily, "I'll no forget that; for ye may be sure, when I intend to dee, that I'll mak' my ain hands my executioners."

"Ay, ay," rejoined the pathetic laird, "I was

aye o' that opinion, and that ye would act a mother's part in your latter end."

To this the leddy made no reply; but by accident coughed rather a little too moistly in his face, which made him shift his seat and soon after retire.

He had not long taken his leave when Milrookit and Robina came in, both in the most affectionate manner; and after the kindest inquiries, they too hoped that she had made her departure clear with this world, and that, when she was removed to a better, no disputes would arise among surviving friends.

"I'm sure," said Robina, "we shall all greatly miss you; and I would be very glad if you would give me some little keepsake out of your own hands, if it were no more than the silver teapot."

"I canna do that yet, Beenie, my leddy, for ye ken I'm obligated to gie the laird and Nell Frizel a tea banquet as soon's I'm able. But when I'm dead and gone,—for we're a' life-like and a' death-like,—if ye outlive me ye'll fin' that I was a grandmother."

"It's pleasant to hear," said Milrookit, "that ye hae sic an inward satisfaction of health; but I hope ye'll no tak' it ill at my wishing for a token o' my grandfather. I would like if ye would gie me from yourself the old-fashioned gold watch, just because it was my grandfather's and sae lang in his aught."

"Ay, Walky, I won'er thou doesna wish for

me, for I was longer in his aught. Bairns, bairns, I propose to outlive my last will and testament; so I redde ye keep a calm sough."

This they thought implied that she had made some provision for them in her last will and testament; and although disappointed in their immediate object, they retired in as complete peace of mind as any affectionate grandchildren like them could retire from a deathbed.

To them succeeded the mother of Walkinshaw.

"Come away, Bell Fatherlans," said the leddy, "sit down beside me;" and she took her kindly by the hand. "The Milrookits, auld and young, hae been here mair ravenous than the worms and clocks[1] of the tomb, for they but devour the dead body; but yon greedy caterpillars would strip me o' leaf and branch afore my time. There was Dirdumwhamle sympathising for a something over and aboon what Meg's to get by the will. Then came Beenie, another of the same, as the Psalmist says, simpering like a yird taid for my silver teapot; and syne naething less would serve her gudeman but a solemneesing wheedlie for the auld gold watch. But I'll sympathise, and I'll simper, and I'll wheedle them. Hae, tak' my keys and gang into the desk-head, and ye'll fin' a bonny sewt pocket-book in the doocot-hole next the window. Bring't to me."

Mrs Charles did as she was desired; and when the pocket-book was brought, the old leddy opened

[1] *Clocks.* Beetles.

it, and taking out one of her Robin Carricks, as she called her bills, she said—

"Bring me a pen that can spell, and I'll indoss this bit hundred pound to thee, Bell, as an over and aboon; and when ye hae gotten't, gang and bid Jamie and Mary come to see me, and I'll gie him the auld gold watch, and her the silver teapot, just as a reward to the sympathising, simpering, and wheedling Milrookits. For, between ourselves, Bell, my time is no to be lang noo amang you. I feel the clay-cold fingers o' Death handling my feet; so when I hae settled my worldly concernments, ye'll send for Dr De'lfear, for I wouldna like to mount into the chariots o' glory without the help o' an orthodox."

All that the lady required was duly performed. She lingered for several days; but at the end of a week from the commencement of her illness she closed her eyes, and her death was, after the funeral, according to the Scottish practice, announced in that loyal and well-conducted old paper, the *Glasgow Courier*, as having taken place, "to the great regret of all surviving friends."

CHAPTER CI

WE have often lamented that so many worthy people should be at the expense and trouble of making last wills and testaments, and yet never enjoy what passes at the reading of them. On all the different occasions where we have been present at such affecting ceremonies, it was quite edifying to see how justly the sorrow was apportioned to the legacies: those enjoying the greatest being always the most profoundly distressed, their tears, by some sort of sympathy, flowing exactly in accordance with the amount of the sums of money or the value of the chattels which they were appointed to receive.

But on no other occasion have we ever been so much struck with the truth of this discovery as on that when, after attending the leddy's remains to the family sepulchre, our acquaintance, Dirdumwhamle, invited us to return to the leddy's house, in order to be present at the solemnity. Considering the tenderness of our feelings, and how much we respect the professed sincerity of mankind, we ought perhaps, in justice to ourselves, knowing how incapable we are of

withstanding the mournful melancholy of such posthumous rites, to have eschewed the invitation of our sighing and mourning friend.

We were, however, enticed by a little curiosity to walk with him arm in arm from the interment, suggesting to him on the way every topic of Christian consolation suitable on such occasions, perceiving how much he stood in need of them all.

When we entered the parlour, which had been so often blithened with the jocose spirit of its defunct mistress, we confess that our emotions were almost too great for our fortitude, and that, as we assured the laird of Dirdumwhamle, our sensibility was so affected that we could with the utmost difficulty repress our hysterical sobbings, which he professed with no less sincerity entirely to believe. Alas! such scenes are too common in this transitory scene of things.

Seeing how much we were all in need of a glass of wine, Dirdumwhamle, with that free thought which forms so prominent a feature of his character, suggested to his lady that she should order in the decanters, and with a bit of the shortbread, enable us to fortify our hearts for the doleful task and duty we had yet to perform.

The decanters were accordingly ordered in, the wine poured into the glasses, and all present to each other sighed, as in silence, the reciprocity of good wishes.

After which a pause ensued—a very syncope of sadness—a dwam of woe, as the leddy herself would have called it, had she been spared to witness how much we all felt. But she was gone. She had paid the debt of nature, and done, as Dirdumwhamle said, what we are all in this life ordained to do. It is, therefore, of no consequence to imagine how she could either have acted or have felt had she been present at the reading of her last will and testament. In a word, after that hiatus in the essay of mourning, it was proposed by young Milrookit that the leddy's scrutoire should be opened and the contents thereof examined.

No objection was made on the part of any of the sorrowful and assembled friends—quite the contrary. They all evinced the most natural solicitude that everything proper and lawful should be done. "It is but showing our respect to the memory of her that is gone," said Dirdumwhamle, "to see in what situation she has left her affairs—not that I have any particular interest in the business, but only, considering the near connection between her and my family, it is due to all the relations that the distribution which she has made of her property should be published among them. It would have been a happy and a comfortable thing to every one who knew her worth had her days been prolonged; but, alas! that was not in her own power. Her time o' this world was brought, by course of nature, to an

end, and no man ought to gainsay the ordinances of Providence. Gudewife, hae ye the key o' the desk-head?"

Mrs Milrookit, his wife, who during this highly sympathetic conversation had kept her handkerchief to her eyes, without removing it put her hand into her pocket, and bringing forth a bunch of keys, looked for one aside, which having found, she presented it to her husband, saying, with a sigh, "That's it."

He took it in his hand, and approaching the scrutoire, found, to his surprise, that it was sealed.

"How is this?" cried Dirdumwhamle, in an accent somewhat discordant with the key in which the performers to the concert of woe were attuned.

"I thought," replied Walkinshaw the laird, "that it was but regular, when my grandmother died, that until we all met, as we are now met, her desk and drawers should be sealed for fear——"

"For fear of what?" Dirdumwhamle was on the point of saying, as we thought; but suddenly checking himself, and again striking the note of woe in perfect harmony, he replied—

"Perfectly right, laird; when all things are done in order no one can have any reason to complain."

Dirdumwhamle then took off the seal, and applying the key to the lock, opened the desk-head, and therein, among other things, found the embroidered pocket-book so well known to our

readers. At the sight of it the tears of his lady began to flow; and they flowed the faster when, on examining its contents, it was discovered that the hundred pound Robin Carrick was not forthcoming, — she having acquired some previous knowledge of its existence, and indeed, with her most dutiful husband, made a dead set at it in their last affectionate conversation with the leddy, with what success the reader is already informed.

A search was then made for the heritable bond for a thousand pounds, but Mrs Charles Walkinshaw surprised us all into extreme sorrow when, on understanding the object of the search, she informed us that the said bond had been most unaccountably given, as the Milrookits thought, to her daughter for a dowry.

An inventory of the contents of the desk being duly and properly made—indeed we ourselves took down the particulars in the most complete manner—an inquest was instituted with respect to the contents of drawers, papers, boxes, trunks, and even into the last pouches that the leddy had worn; but neither the silver teapot nor the old gold watch was forthcoming. Mrs Charles Walkinshaw, however, again explained, and the explanation was attended with the happiest effects, insomuch as to us it served to lessen in a great degree the profound sorrow in which all the Milrookits had been plunged.

But yet no will was found, and Dirdumwhamle was on the point of declaring that, the deceased

having died intestate, his wife, her daughter, succeeded, of course, to all she had left. But while he was speaking young Mrs Milrookit happened to cast her eyes into one of the pigeon-holes in the scrutoire-head, where, tied with a red tape in the most business-like manner, a will was found,—we shall not say that Dirdumwhamle had previously seen it, but undoubtedly he appeared surprised that it should have been so near his sight and touch so long unobserved,—which gave us a hint to suggest that, when people make their wills and testaments, they should always tie them with red tape, that none of their heirs, executors, or assigns may fall into the mistake of not noticing them at the time of the funeral examination, and afterwards, when by themselves, tear or burn them by mistake.

CHAPTER CII

It appeared by this will that the leddy had, with the exception of a few inconsiderable legacies to the rest of her family, and a trifling memorial of her affection to our friend Walkinshaw, bequeathed all to her daughter, at which that lady, with the greatest propriety, burst out into the most audible lament for her affectionate mother; and Dirdumwhamle, her husband, became himself so agitated with grief that he was almost unable to proceed with the reading of the affecting document. Having gradually mastered his feelings, he was soon, however, able to condole with Mrs Charles Walkinshaw upon the disappointment she had no doubt suffered; observing, by way of consolation, that it was, after all, only what was to have been expected, for the leddy, the most kind of parents, naturally enough considered her own daughter as the nearest and dearest of all her kith and kin.

During this part of the scene we happened inadvertently to look towards Walkinshaw, and were not a little shocked to observe a degree of levity sparkling in his eyes quite unbecoming

such a sorrowful occasion; and still more distressed were we at the irreverence with which, almost in actual and evident laughter, he inquired at Dirdumwhamle the date of the paper.

It was found to have been made several years before, soon after the decease of poor Walter.

"Indeed!" said Walkinshaw pawkily: "that's a very important circumstance, for I happen to have another will in my pocket, made at Edinburgh while the leddy was there at my marriage, and the contents run somewhat differently."

The tears of the lady of Dirdumwhamle were instantaneously dried up, and the most sensitive of lairds himself appeared very much surprised; while, with some vibrating accent in his voice, he requested that this new last will and testament might be read.

Sorry are we to say that, in doing so, Walkinshaw was so little affected that he even chuckled while he read. This was, no doubt, owing to the little cause he had to grieve, a legacy of five guineas to buy a ring being all that the leddy had bequeathed to him.

This second will, though clearly and distinctly framed, was evidently dictated by the leddy herself. For it began by declaring that, having taken it into her most serious consideration, by and with the advice of her private counsel, Mr Frazer of Glengael, whom she appointed executor, she had resolved to make her last will and testament; and after other formalities, couched some-

what in the same strain, she bequeathed sundry legacies to her different grandchildren,—first, as we have said, five guineas, as a token of her particular love, to Walkinshaw, he standing in no need of any further legacy, and being, over and moreover, indebted to her sagacity for the recovery of his estate. Then followed the enumeration of certain trinkets and Robin Carricks, which were to be delivered over to, and to be held and enjoyed by, Mary, his sister. To this succeeded a declaration, that her daughter Margaret, the wife of Dirdumwhamle, should enjoy the main part of her gathering in liferent, but not until the laird, her husband, had paid his debt of nature and departed out of this world; and if the said legatee did not survive her husband, then the legacy was to go to Mrs Charles Walkinshaw, the testatrix's daughter-in-law. "As for my two grateful grandchildren, Walkinshaw Milrookit, and Robina, his wife," continued the spirit of the leddy to speak in the will, "I bequeath to them, and their heirs for ever, all and haill that large sum of money which they still stand indebted to me, for and on account of bed, board, and washing, of which debt only the inconsiderable trifle of one thousand pounds was ever paid."

The testing clause was all that followed this important provision, but the will was in every respect complete, and so complete also was the effect intended that young Milrookit and his wife

Robina immediately rose and retired, without speaking, and Dirdumwhamle and his lady also prepared to go away, neither of them being seemingly in a condition to make any remark on the subject.

Such is the natural conclusion of our story; but perhaps it is expected that we should say something of the subsequent history of Walkinshaw, especially as his wife has brought him nine sons,—"all male-heirs," as Dirdumwhamle often says, with a sigh, when he thinks of his son and Robina having only added daughters to the increasing population of the kingdom. But Walkinshaw's career as a soldier belongs to a more splendid theme, which, as soon as ever we receive a proper hint to do so, with ten thousand pounds to account, we propose to undertake, for he was present at the most splendid achievements of the late universal war. His early campaigns were not, however, brilliant; but, in common with all his companions in arms during the first years of that mighty contest, he still felt, under the repulses of many disasters, that the indisputable heroism of the British spirit was never impaired, and that they were still destined to vindicate their ancient superiority over France.

These heroic breathings do not, however, belong to our domestic story; and, therefore, all we have to add is that, as often as he revisited his patrimonial home on leave of absence, he

found the dinnering of his friends in the royal city almost as hard work as the dragooning of his foes. Since the peace, now that he is finally settled at Kittlestonheugh with all his blushing honours thick upon him, the Lord Provost and Magistrates have never omitted any opportunity in their power of treating him with all that distinction for which, as a corporation, they are so deservedly celebrated. Indeed, there are few communities where there is less of the spirit of ostracism, or where a man of public merit is more honoured by his fellow-citizens, than in Glasgow. Therefore say we in fine—

LET GLASGOW FLOURISH!

NOTES

Note A.—MARRIAGE CUSTOMS

Most of the old marriage customs of Scotland have died out. The pay-wedding, admirably described in *The Annals of the Parish*, survives in the West only among the colliers. It is not considered a reputable ceremony: it is rarely, if ever, countenanced by the decent agricultural labourer; and, like "the creeling," lingers only because of the occasion it gives for an exceeding jollity. The manner of "the creeling" (in its present modified form) is this:—When the bridegroom goes down the pit on the day after the wedding, he is partially stripped, and "hurled" in one of the hutches, or coal-buggies: unless, indeed, he compounds by a liberal furnishing of strong drink.

The "green-garter" is still worn at weddings by the elder unmarried sisters of the bride, who had to dance in their stocking-soles, as have, to this day in Ayrshire, the elder bachelor brothers of the bridegroom. When all the sons of a family have been married save the youngest, Kyle folk will say to him, "Ha, lad! ye're the pickle next the wind noo!"—that is, "You are now the only ear left on the family stalk," *pickle* here being the *tap-pickle* of Burns.

In some remote corners of the country, the custom of washing the bride's feet (the feet-washing in the case of the bridegroom is quite common) held until recently. The manner of it closely resembled the description in *The Entail* (Chapter xxviii.), the only difference being that salt was mingled with the hot water, which seems to point to the idea of purification in the rite. Another gathering previous to the wedding was "the Bookin'," on the night on which the names of the

intended bride and bridegroom were "given in." On the wedding-night itself the young couple had to dance the first reel together, and they stayed and danced all night with the company.

In his *Farmer's Address to the Auld Mare*, Burns says :—

> "At Brooses, thou had ne'er a fellow
> For pith and speed."

The reference is to "running the broose." After the wedding the party galloped to the man's house, and the first to arrive there brought out a jar of whisky and treated the rest as they came up. If there were no vehicles, the guests walked "cleekit," and only broke into a rush when near their destination.

Note B.—THE KIRK O' SATAN IN DUNLOP STREET

Leddy Grippy's words reflect the antipathy to the theatre that existed in Glasgow until the beginning of this century. In 1752 a timber-shed had been erected in which actors performed after finishing the Edinburgh season ; and the feeling was so strong against the play that "ladies and dress-parties going thither from the lower part of the town had to be protected by a military guard." In this timber-theatre Digges played *Douglas* and Mrs Ward *Lady Randolph* in Home's tragedy. In 1754 "the celebrated Mr George Whitfield was preaching from the tent in the High-Church Yard. In the fervour of his zeal, he cast his eyes upon the Theatrical Booth, and quickly denounced it to be the Devil's Booth ; no sooner did he articulate the words than the outskirts of the congregation ran to the Booth and quickly levelled it to the ground." When Messrs Jackson, Beale, and Davis sought to build a theatre in 1764, "neither magistrates nor private proprietors would sell, feu, or lease ground for a play-house, at any terms, within the whole city." They had to build beyond the burgh, therefore ; and when their house was opened by Mrs Bellamy, it was raided by a mob, who destroyed the actress's wardrobe.

It was in 1785 that Jackson built the Dunlop Street Theatre, referred to in the text. Two Glasgow clergymen had tried

to persuade the magistrates to interdict the builder ; but an order from the Court of Session forbade any one from interfering with the lawful use of his property. The theatre was opened by Mrs Siddons, Mrs Jordan, and others of first rank.

Note C.—A LOUP-THE-DYKE JENNY CAMERON

The romantic side of the story of Bonnie Jean Cameron is shown prettily enough in the ballad of the name :—

" Ye'll a' hae heard tell o' Bonnie Jean Cameron,
How she fell sick, and she was like to dee,
And a' that they could recommend her
Was ae blithe blink o' the Young Pretender.
Rare, oh, rare, bonnie Jeanie Cameron !
Rare, oh, rare, Jeanie Cameron !

To Charlie she wrote a very long letter,
Stating wha were his friends and wha were his foes ;
And a' her words were sweet and tender,
To win the heart o' the Young Pretender.
Rare, oh, rare, bonnie Jeanie Cameron !
Rare, oh, rare, Jeanie Cameron !

Scarcely had she sealed the letter wi' a ring,
When up flew the door, and in cam her king :
She prayed to the saints, and bade angels defend her,
And sank i' the arms o' the Young Pretender.
Rare, oh, rare, bonnie Jeanie Cameron !
Rare, oh, rare, Jeanie Cameron ! "

There is a difficulty as to the identity of the heroine. In the *Traditions of Edinburgh* is this note :—" Jeanie Cameron, the mistress of Prince Charles Edward, was seen by an old acquaintance of ours standing upon the streets of Edinburgh about the year '86. She was dressed in men's clothes, and had a wooden leg. This celebrated and once attractive beauty, whose charms and Amazonian gallantry had captivated a prince, afterwards died in a stair-foot, somewhere in the

Canongate." And this story is corroborated by a friend of Mr George Eyre-Todd, and is referred to in the *Sketch Book of the North*.

The *History of East Kilbride, by David Ure, Preacher of the Gospel*, on the other hand, tells of Mrs Jean Cameron, of Mount Cameron, "whose zealous attachment to the House of Stuart, and the active part she took to support its interest, in the year 1745, made her well known throughout Britain. Her enemies, indeed, took unjust freedoms with her good name; but what can the unfortunate expect from a fickle and misjudging world? . . . She attended service in the parish church, in which she joined with becoming devotion. Her brother and his family of all her friends paid her the greatest attention. She died in 1773." Here is still another account:—"Jenny was born about 1695, and was the favourite daughter of Cameron of Glandesseray. Sent to Edinburgh to be educated, she began to show at the age of sixteen that passion for intrigue which, according to Ray [a rabid Hanoverian], was a marked feature of her life. Detected in this first *faux pas*, her friends, to 'bury the scandal,' sent her to a French nunnery. Here again her conduct was anything but nunlike. . . . On the landing of Prince Charles, Bonnie Jeanie Cameron raised 250 of her nephew's tenants, and, marching at their head, offered their services to the Prince. According to Ray [whose dates, however, contradict each other in different editions], the lady must have been fifty years of age when she captivated Prince Charlie. She cannot have been the pure and disinterested creature depicted by the Rev. David Ure, A.M. Nor, if she was born in 1695, can she have been the person who begged in the streets of Edinburgh nearly a hundred years after."

In the latter half of last century, therefore, there were two Jean, or Jenny, Camerons, for each of whom it was claimed that she was the Chevalier's light o' love. In discussions on the subject recently, apparently, the reference in Galt has been overlooked. It seems to support the claims of Mrs Jean Cameron of East Kilbride. Galt was born and reared in the West, and would be far more likely to know about the famous Western beauty than about the old beggar in Edinburgh. The landlord in *Tom Jones* mistakes Sophia Western for the "Pretender's mistress, Madame Jenny Cameron." It might be said that it would be as reasonable to make Jeanie Cameron

born in Somerset because she is mentioned by Fielding, as to make her die in Lanark because she is mentioned by Galt. But Fielding published *Tom Jones* in 1749, when—

> " Up the heathery mountain,
> And doon the scroggy glen,
> The lassies daurna gang to milk
> For fear o' Charlie's men : "

when, therefore, Jenny Cameron's name would be a byword in England. Galt would know his Fielding, and might know the history of the Edinburgh Jean ; but the presumption is that his reference to "loup-the-dyke Jenny" was based on Western tradition, which still supports the case of the lady of Kilbride.

Note D.—AUTHOR'S REMARKS

Galt's own remarks on *The Entail*, in his autobiographical writings, are very few :—

The Entail is founded on an anecdote related to me by the present Lord Provost of Glasgow [Robert Grahame, Esq., of Whitehill]. The sunny summer storm was introduced to allow of a description of the northern coast of Scotland, which I very vividly received from Miss Sinclair, a daughter of the distinguished baronet. The work is considered among my best, and has been honoured by the particular approbation of two distinguished men, to whose judgment the bravest critic will defer. I was told by a friend that Sir Walter Scott thought so well of it as to have read it thrice—a tribute to its deservings that any author would be proud of ; and the Earl of Blessington not only wrote to me that Lord Byron had also read it three times, but, when we afterwards met, reported his lordship's opinion still more flatteringly.

The Earl of Blessington's note was as follows :—

> "Montjoy Forest, Omagh, County Tyrone,
> "*August* 8, 1823.
>
> "My dear Galt,—Yours followed me here, where, if you do come to Ireland this month, I shall be truly happy to see you, and give the best accommodation this poor cottage will afford.

"Lady B—— is at Naples, and, I believe, pursuing her account of what she sees, and marks, and inwardly digests.

"I got a copy of *Ringhan Gilhaize, mais, entre nous, je ne l'aime pas.*—Ever yours most truly, B.

"Lord Byron read *The Entail* three times."

There is more in this little (French) expression than appears. To me, however, it is very plain. The Earl of Blessington was, in my opinion, one of the politest men—taking as my standard, respect for the feelings of others; indeed, for delicacy I never met with his equal. In such a matter as this, a genuine man of the world would have been civilly complimentary: an honest man used sterling English: and a Sir John Brute have said that the book was d——d bad. His lordship's tact was in employing the medium of a foreign language to convey an opinion I am sure was sincere.

But it was not the favourable sentiments of the two first geniuses of the age that made me think *The Entail* not a failure. One day, when dining with the Earl of Ripon at Leamington, he remarked that Leddy Grippy was like an acquaintance. His expression was, "One thinks one knows her."

THE END

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